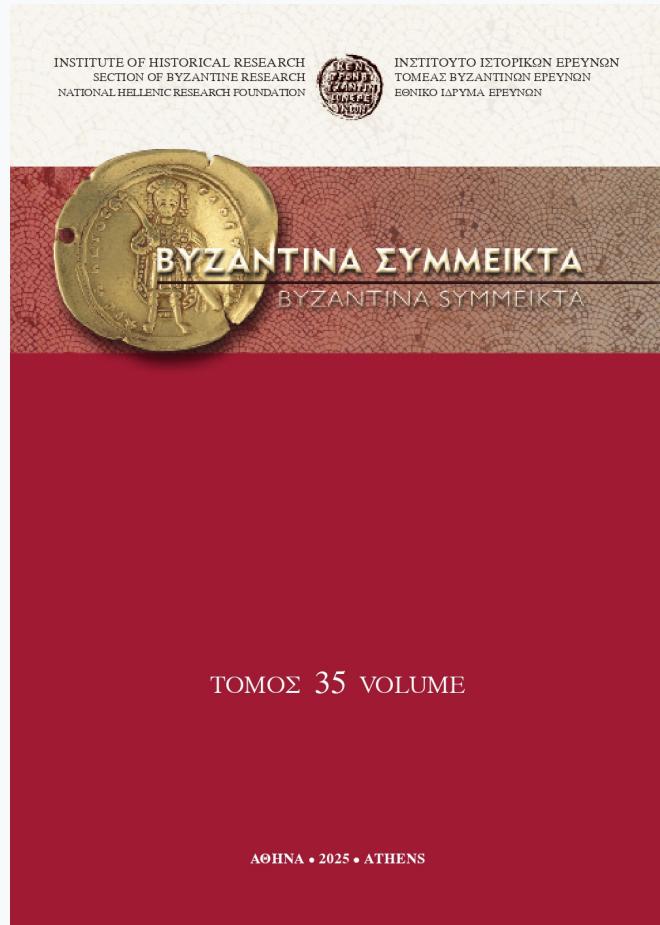


## Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα

Τόμ. 35 (2025)

BYZANTINA ΣΥΜΜΕΙΚΤΑ 35



**'Provintia Lakedemonie' and Laconian Chamareti in 1204**

*Αριστοτέλης Κοσκινάς*

doi: [10.12681/byzsym.37344](https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.37344)

Copyright © 2025, Aristotelis Koskinas



Άδεια χρήσης [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

### Βιβλιογραφική αναφορά:

Κοσκινάς Α. (2025). 'Provintia Lakedemonie' and Laconian Chamareti in 1204: A New Perspective on 'Partitio Romanie'. *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα*, 35, 107–147. <https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.37344>

## ARISTOTELIS KOSKINAS

### PROVINTIA LAKEDEMONIE AND LACONIAN CHAMARETI IN 1204: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON *PARTITIO ROMANIE*\*

Time and again after its nineteenth-century editions by Tafel and Thomas the *Partitio Romanie*<sup>1</sup>, a Latin document outlining a partition of Byzantine Empire after Constantinople's fall to the conquering Fourth Crusade, has been debated for its omissions of well-known imperial provinces<sup>2</sup>. As chance

---

\* I would like to extend my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their comments and bibliographic suggestions contributing to the final paper. Any shortcomings are the sole responsibility of the author.

1. T. L. F. TAFEL, *Symbolarum criticarum, geographiam Byzantinam spectantium, partes duae. Pars posterior. Pactum Francorum anni 1204 de partitione regni Graeci* [Abhandlungen der historischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 23, Supplement 5], München 1849, no. 3, 1-136; TAFEL – THOMAS, vol. 1, no. 121, 452-501. For a critical overview of these editions and the earlier ones, see A. CARILE, *Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie*, *St Ven* 7 (1965), 208-213, 215.

2. TAFEL, *Symbolarum*, Part 2, 46, 48-49; TAFEL – THOMAS, vol. 1, 460-461; W. HEYD, *Geschichte des Levantehandels im Mittelalter*, vol. 1, Stuttgart 1879, 297 n. 2; W. HEYD, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au moyen-âge*, vol. 1, trans. F. RAYNARD, Leipzig <sup>2</sup>1885, 269 n. 2; K. VON SPRUNER – T. MENKE, *Hand-Atlas für die Geschichte des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit*, Gotha <sup>3</sup>1880, map Orient no. 11 (= no. 86, inlay map “Lateinisches Theilungsproject 1204”); E. GERLAND, *Geschichte der Kaiser Balduin I. und Heinrich, 1204-1206* [Id., *Geschichte der Frankenherrschaft in Griechenland*, vol. 2: *Geschichte des lateinisches Kaiserreiches von Konstantinopel*, part 1] Bad Homburg 1905, 29-30, 30 n. 2; J. LONGNON, *Problèmes de l'histoire de la principauté de Morée* (Premier article), *Journal des savants* (1946), 78-81; J. LONGNON, *L'empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée*, Paris 1949, 56-57 (map), 61; D. A. ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ κράτει. Κεφάλαιον δεύτερον. Ἡ *Partitio Romaniae*, *EEBΣ* 21 (1951), 180-181, 185, 189, 191, 206; D. A. ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ κράτει, Θράκη, *EEBΣ* 22 (1952), 160,

would have it in 1965, the very year in which Antonio Carile published

177 n. 3, 181-182; D. A. ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ κράτει, Μικρὰ Ἀσία. Γενικὰ συμπεράσματα, *EEBΣ* 25 (1955), 150-155; CARILE, *Partitio*, 152, 152-153 n. 150, 158-160 and n. 175 and 180, 161, 163-165 and n. 197-199 and 203, 289; A. CARILE, *Nuovi studi*, in: A. CARILE, *Per una storia dell'impero latino di Costantinopoli (1204-1261). Seconda edizione ampliata* [Il mondo medievale. Sezione di storia bizantina e slava 2], Bologna <sup>2</sup>1978, 322-324; H. AHRWEILER, *L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317) particulièrement au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *TM* 1 (1965), 6-7 (= H. AHRWEILER, *Byzance. Les pays et les territoires* [Variorum 42], London 1976, no. IV); R. L. WOLFF - H. W. HAZARD, *The Later Crusades, 1189-1311* [A *History of the Crusades*, ed. K. M. SETTON, vol. 2], Madison, Milwaukee - London 1969, 192; B. HENDRICKX, *Oἱ πολιτικοὶ καὶ στρατιωτικοὶ θεσμοὶ τῆς Λατινικῆς αὐτοκρατορίας τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως κατὰ τοὺς πρώτους χρόνους τῆς ὑπάρχειας τῆς*, Thessaloniki 1970, 82-83; B. HENDRICKX, Les institutions de l'empire latin de Constantinople (1204-1261): la cour et les dignitaires, *Buζαντινά* 9 (1977), 193-194; N. OIKONOMIDÈS, La décomposition de l'empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l'empire de Nicée: à propos de la *Partitio Romaniae*, in: *XVe Congrès International d'Études Byzantines. Rapports et co-rapports*, vol. 1: *Histoire*, part 1: Forces centrifuges et centripètes dans le monde byzantin entre 1071 et 1261, Athens 1976, 3, 5 and n. 9, 7-8, 10, 12-23, 27 (= N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Byzantium from the Ninth Century to the Fourth Crusade* [Variorum 369], London 1992, no. XX); K. M. SETTON, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, vol. 1: *The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, Philadelphia 1976, 18, 19 n. 80; P. MAGDALINO, A neglected authority for the history of the Peloponnese in the early thirteenth century: Demetrios Chomatianos, Archbishop of Bulgaria, *BZ* 70 (1977), 321; J.-C. CHEYNET, Philadelphie, un quart de siècle de dissidence, 1182-1206, in: *Philadelphie et autres études*, ed. H. AHRWEILER [Byzantina Sorbonnensis 4], Paris 1984, 48-49 and n. 62 (= Id., *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* [Variorum 859], London - New York 2006, no. IX); J.-C. CHEYNET, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* [Byzantina Sorbonnensis 9], Paris 1990, nos. 204-205, 143-145; no. 208, 146; no. 210, 147-148; 461 and n. 11; 463 and n. 20-21, 24-25; H. A. KALLIGAS, *Byzantine Monemvasia. The Sources*, Monemvasia 1990, 71 and n. 1-2; A. STAVRIDOU-ZAFRAKA, *Νίκαια καὶ Ἡπειρος τον 13ο αι. Ιδεολογική αντιπαράθεση στην προσπάθεια τους να ανακτήσουν την αυτοκρατορία* [Εταιρεία Βυζαντινών Ερευνών 7], Thessaloniki 1990, 49-50; D. JACOBY, The Venetian Presence in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204-1261): the Challenge of Feudalism and the Byzantine Inheritance, *JÖB* 43 (1993), 149 n. 26; P. GOUNARIDIS, Η τύχη τῆς Ρόδου τον ΙΙ' αιώνα, *Σύμμεικτα* 15 (2002), 177 and n. 1-2, 180; A. NANETTI, Modalità e tempi dell'inizio del dominio diretto dei Venetici sul Peloponneso (1204-1209) e la scelta di governare direttamente solo Korone e Methone, *Σύμμεικτα* 17 (2005), 258-259; A. NANETTI, Theseus and the Fourth Crusade: Outlining a Historical Investigation of a Cultural Problem, in: *Mare et Litora. Essays presented to Sergei Karpov for his 60th Birthday*, ed. R. SHUKUROV, Moscow 2009, 390; A. NANETTI, *Venezia e il Peloponneso, 992-1718. Indagini storiche tra*

his seminal critical edition and commentary of the Latin text<sup>3</sup>, Hélène Ahrweiler first propounded that these omissions reflected an episodic eclipse of Byzantine rule in variably sized enclaves all over the Empire<sup>4</sup>. This innovative interpretation was meticulously elaborated by Nicolas Oikonomides. He proposed that the *Partitio* was restricted to provinces either subjugated in 1203 by the Crusaders for Alexius IV Angelus, an emperor of their own creation, or nominally recognising his legitimacy<sup>5</sup>. The missing pieces of this gigantic jigsaw puzzle, territories seditiously distanced from the newly-imposed regime<sup>6</sup> or held by pretenders to the throne<sup>7</sup>, were intentionally omitted. This line of interpretation found some advocates<sup>8</sup> but never truly gained currency. Carile relentlessly rejected Oikonomides's hypotheses questioning both their documentary sufficiency and the methodical procedure applied for their scaffolding – what he rendered an untenable reliance upon arguments from silence<sup>9</sup>.

---

*territorio, biblioteca e archivio*, Venice 2021, 73-74; R. POKORNY, Der territoriale Umfang des lateinischen Königreichs Thessaloniki, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 62 (2006), 540-543 and n. 9-10, 570 and n. 82, 596 and n. 161, 602-604; E. RAGIA, *Η Κοιλάδα του Κάτω Μαίανδρου στη βυζαντινή εποχή, ca 600-1300. Γεωγραφία και ιστορία* [Βυζαντινά Κείμενα και Μελέτες 51], Thessaloniki 2009, 261, 264-265, 329; F. VAN TRICHT, *The Latin 'Renovatio' of Byzantium. The Empire of Constantinople (1204-1228)*, trans. P. LONGBOTTOM, Leiden – Boston 2011, 47-51; Ph. TH. VLACHOPOULOU, *Λέων Σγουρός. Ο βίος και η πολιτεία του Βυζαντινού άρχοντα της βορειοανατολικής Πελοποννήσου στις αρχές του 13ου αιώνα*, Thessaloniki 2013, 41.

3. See above, n. 1.

4. AHRWEILER, Smyrne, 6-7. See also OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 3 and n. 1, 19 and n. 41.

5. OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 21. For a cartographic depiction, see *ibid.*, 15.

6. OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 17-21.

7. The fugitive emperor Alexius III and his designated heir Theodore Lascaris held substantial territories across the Balkan and Asian hinterlands, respectively. See OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 10-11 n. 25, 14 and 16-17 (I), 20 (VI), 22-27. For the dissident Grand Comneni, see *ibid.*, 19-20 (V).

8. MAGDALINO, Neglected authority, 321; CHEYNET, Philadelphie, 48-49 and n. 62; CHEYNET, *Pouvoir*, nos. 204-205, 143-145; no. 208, 146; no. 210, 147-148; 461 and n. 11; 463 and n. 20-21 and 24-25; E. MALAMUT, *Les îles de l'empire byzantin, VIIIe-XIIe siècles* [Byzantina Sorbonensis 8], Paris 1988, 99-101, 331-332; KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 71 and n. 1-2; STAVIDOU-ZAFRAKA, *Νίκαια και Ήπειρος*, 49-50; GOUNARIDIS, *Ρόδος*, 177 and n. 1-2, 180; RAGIA, *Κάτω Μαίανδρος*, 261, 264-265, 329.

9. CARILE, Nuovi studi, 322-324. See also HENDRICKX, Institutions, 193-194. JACOBY,

Apart from contested omissions, though, the *Partitio* bears testimony for comparable, if less impressive, additions to Byzantine provincial nomenclature. Such a novelty is a “province of Lacedaemonia”, *Provintia Lakedemonie*<sup>10</sup>, never before securely attested as a provincial unit<sup>11</sup> except for ecclesiastical usage. The prelate of Sparta, holding metropolitan rank only since 1082/83, was styled bishop of Lacedaemonia from time immemorial<sup>12</sup>. Still the relevant secular *provincia* –a term probably denoting Greek *θέμα* (theme) which came to signify a fiscal district<sup>13</sup>– is nowhere to be found in the chrysobull awarded to Venice in 1198 by Emperor Alexius III Angelus<sup>14</sup>.

Contemporary historian Nicetas Choniates listing provinces torn apart from the European half of the Empire in the aftermath of the 1204

---

Venetian Presence, 146 n. 16, 149 n. 26; VLACHOPOULOU, *Σγονδός*, 41; NANETTI, Modalità, 258-259; NANETI, Theseus, 390; NANETI, *Peloponneso*, 74; POKORNY, Königreich Thessaloniki, 542-543 n. 10. For a view critical to both Oikonomides and Carile, cf. F. VAN TRICHT, *Latin Renovatio*, 47-51.

10. CARILE, *Partitio*, 219.45.

11. CARILE, *Partitio*, 161 with facing map III (s.v. Σπάρτη), 255 (No. 45). OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 17. A rubric in a thirteenth-century manuscript names the addressee of an eleventh-century letter as administrator of *λακεδαμίν*; this abbreviation was read “Lacedaemonia” by the editor but may equally be read “Lacedaemon”. See A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, Ξιφιλίνος, πρωτοπόρεδρος καὶ προνοητής Λακεδαμιονίας, *BZ* 14 (1905), 564 and n. 5. See also *ODB*, v. 3, entry Pronoetes (A. KAZHDAN); A.-K. WASSILIOU-SEIBT, Der Terminus προνοητής in der byzantinischen Verwaltung, *ZRVI* 50 (2013), 158.

12. J. DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae Episcopatuum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Texte critique, introduction et notes* [Géographie Ecclésiastique de l’Empire Byzantin 1], Paris 1981, 244 (Notitia 3.744): «ό Λακεδέου (sic)», 284 (Not. 7.550), 303 (Not. 9.411), 325 (Not. 10.493), 344 (Not. 11.82), 350 (Not. 12.78), 362 (Not. 13.535), 369 (Not. 13.788), 376 (Not. 14.70).

13. T. L. F. TAFEL, *Symbolarum criticarum, geographiam Byzantinam spectantium, partes duae. Pars prior. Pactum Veneto-Graecum anni 1199 de ordinando commercio* [Abhandlungen der historischen Classe der k. bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 23, Supplement 5], München 1849, No. 2, 52-53 (note); ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως, Μικρὰ Ἀσία, 157 and n. 1; H. GLYKATZI-AHRWEILER, Recherches sur l’administration de l’empire byzantin aux IX-XIème siècles, *BCH* 84 (1960), 82-83, 86-88 (= H. AHRWEILER, *Études sur les structures administratives et sociales de Byzance* [Variorum 5], London 1971, No. VIII); CARILE, *Partitio*, 225-227.

14. *I trattati con Bisanzio 992-1198*, ed. M. POZZA – G. RAVEGNANI [Pacta Veneta 4], Venice 1993, no. 11, 119-137.

catastrophe gave due notice to a certain Leo Chamaretus “holding sway over the vale of Lakedaimon” as a “tyrant over the Laconians”<sup>15</sup>. Choniates further adduced an Aristotelian category, *τυραννίδας*, i.e., tyrant polities, equating this Laconian petty-dominion<sup>16</sup> with a similar one imposed on Argolis and Corinthia by another Leo, the infamous Sgurus of Nauplium<sup>17</sup>. Both of these Byzantine rump states were soon to be absorbed by a Frankish seigniory established in western Peloponnese, the so-called Principality of Achaea<sup>18</sup>. Meanwhile, for the best part of the year after Constantinople’s fall, the younger Geoffrey of Villehardouin –the Crusade chronicler’s namesake nephew destined to become the second prince of Achaea– collaborated in western Peloponnese with an obscure “Greek” magnate<sup>19</sup>. Geoffrey the chronicler, a high-rank official of the newly-established Latin empire of Constantinople, cautiously avoided to ever name his relative’s comrade, but a late trend in the literature is to identify him with either Leo Chamaretus or his otherwise unknown father and predecessor<sup>20</sup>.

As a piece of provincial nomenclature shared to both the *Partitio Romanie* and the politically charged narrative of Nicetas Choniates, Lacedaemonia provides an intriguing case study for checking Oikonomides’s hypotheses anew. According to him every single alteration from provincial nomenclature (either an omission or addition) in the 1204 document must have signified belligerent stance of a local leader in a turn of the century context of escalating civil tensions. He explicitly described Chamaretus as

15. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. J. L. VAN DIETEN, Berlin – New York 1975, 638.42-43. See also *ibid.*, 611.30-35 *apparatus*. English version from *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. H. J. MAGOULIAS, Detroit 1984, 350. For the older literature on Leo Chamaretus, see A. G. C. SAVVIDES, Τα προβλήματα σχετικά με τον Λέοντα Χαμάρετο, *Βυζαντινά Μελέται* 3 (1991), 350-383, *passim* (= A. SAVVIDES, *Μελετήματα βυζαντινής προσωπογραφίας και τοπικής ιστορίας. Ανατύπωση άρθρων 1981-1991*, Athens 1992, 221-254). See also CHEYNET, *Pouvoir*, no. 217, 152-153 and n. 1-2; and 317.

16. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 637.34-40, 638.52.

17. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 605.61-608.51, 609.73-76, 611.26-35, 611.30-35 *apparatus*, 638.41, 638.55-61.

18. The name Achaea, originally used “in an ecclesiastical context”, was soon secularised; see SETTON, *Papacy*, 26 n. 102.

19. *Villehardouin. La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. E. FARAL, Paris 1938-1939, vol. 2, 134 (§ 325), 136 (§ 326).

20. See below, n. 121-122.

a local archon loyal to Alexius IV<sup>21</sup>. Expanding this particular hypothesis A. G. C. Savvides further implied that the “tyrant of the Laconians” had already become a dissident during the reign of Alexius III, the one deposed by the Crusaders<sup>22</sup>. Both of these suggestions assuming that the *Provintia Lakedemonie* was intentionally omitted in the chrysobull awarded by Alexius III to Venice, neither of them could be upheld were Lacedaemonia to prove a truly novel province only established after 1198. Correspondingly, if it can be demonstrated to antedate the 1198 chrysobull, that will lend credence to the interpretive model developed by Oikonomides for the 1204 text.

To reappraise Oikonomides’s model this paper discusses the establishment of the *Provintia Lakedemonie* attested in the *Partitio Romanie* and its apparent emergence as an autonomous “tyrant polity” due to political scheming of the Laconian Chamareti, scrutinising internal evidence of the text at issue, contemporaneous literary sources, and sigillographic testimony related to this powerful Peloponnesian family. Some contestations regarding the provenance and power base of Leo Chamaretus are inquired in advance (section I). The promotion of Lacedaemonian bishopric to a metropolis in 1082/83 merits a closer consideration as a potential historical context for the creation of a namesake secular (fiscal) district (section II). The dynamics and wider repercussions of presumed Chamareti sedition, especially before the culmination of the Fourth Crusade, warrant a thorough investigation (section III). Attention is also drawn on the joint venture of Villehardouine’s Campanian mercenary (?) knights, and potentially the Chamareti, through the spring of 1205, resulting in extended, though short-lived, conquests in Western Peloponnesian (section IV)<sup>23</sup>. In the final section the findings are summarised and a generalisation indicating their relevance to Oikonomides’s hypotheses and the precariousness of the Empire on the eve of the 1204 catastrophe is provided.

21. N. OIKONOMIDES, Ἡ Δ΄ Σταυροφορία καὶ ἡ ἄλωση τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (1204), in: *Ιστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Εθνους*, vol. 9. *Βυζαντινὸς Ἑλληνισμός. Μεσοβυζαντινοὶ Χρόνοι (1071-1204). Υότεροβυζαντινοὶ Χρόνοι (1204-1453)*, Athens 1979, 39A.

22. SAVVIDES, Χαμάρετος, 361 [232] and n. 37, 365 [236].

23. The Campanians’ ascendancy following their regrouping under the auspices of William of Champlite in the spring of 1205 (see below, n. 127-128) lies beyond the scope of this paper.

## I. The origin and power base of Leo Chamaretus

Leo Chamaretus is one of the several mediaeval figures correlated by H. A. Kalligas with Monemvasia<sup>24</sup>; a thriving Late-Byzantine harbour town on the Aegean coast of Laconia, not far from Cape Malea. While Kalligas adduces some well-known excerpts of Nicetas Choniates, her conclusions are rather singular. In her opinion Choniates's description of Chamaretus as a tyrant implies, in what she terms the "archaic language used by the historian", that "[Leo] was a ruler, the *rex* of the Lacones, the inhabitants of the territory of Monemvasia"<sup>25</sup>. Being paralleled by Choniates with a later "usurpation" of Nauplium by a relative of Sgurus<sup>26</sup>, "the occupation of the plain of Lacedaemonia by a 'Lacon' named Chamaretos, confirms", according to her, "that Chamaretos came from Monemvasia". "Chamaretos was not an official of the imperial administration", she concludes, "but a local archon, who ... managed to take under control areas beyond his territory"<sup>27</sup>. This overdetailed interpretation is stretching back to pretensions of the notorious *Chronicle of Monemvasia*. Kalligas goes as far as to claim for Monemvasia

24. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 35 ("bishop of the polis of the Lacedaemonians"), 69 n. 99 (I. Maurozomes), 71-79 (Chamaretus). H. KALLIGAS., Monemvasia, Seventh-Fifteenth Centuries, in: *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. A. E. LAIOU [DOS 39], Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. 2002, vol. 1, 886-887 (Chamaretus), 887, 894 (Th. and I. Maurozomes). Some of these correlates were adapted by Paul Magdalino in his brilliant book on Manuel Comnenus; see P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 1143-1180, Cambridge 1993, 155 and n. 172 (Chamareti), 257-258 n. 99, 491-2 (Chamaretus and Th. Maurozomes), 539 (index entry: "Chamaretoi, Chamaretos family, dynasts in Monemvasia"). For a critical reception of this approach, see A. DUNN, book review of H. A. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia. A Byzantine City State*, London - New York 2010, in: *The Classical Review* 61 (2011), no. 1, 215; I. ANAGNOSTAKIS, 'From Tempe to Sparta': Power and Contestation prior to the Latin Conquest of 1204, in: *Byzantium, 1180-1204: 'The Sad Quarter of a Century?'*, ed. A. SIMPSON [IHR/NHFR, International Symposium 22], Athens 2015, 135-157, esp. 150 n. 48.

25. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 74.

26. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 611.30-35 *apparatus*: τὸ Ναύπλιον παρά τινος Γαβριήλ, κασιγνήτον τοῦ Σγουροῦ, κατεχόμενον, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ κοίλη Λακεδαιμων παρὰ Χαμαρέτον τινὸς Λάκωνος.

27. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 74. For a diametrically opposed explanation, see G. SAINT-GUILAIN, The conquest of Monemvasia by the Franks: date and context, *RSBN* n.s. 52 (2015), 274-275 n. 102.

ancient Spartan pedigree and thus a Laconian, Dorian, and ultimately Greek autochthony<sup>28</sup>. She further suggests that this autochthon identity, extended already in the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* to the warlike mountaineers of Tsaconia<sup>29</sup>, “hints at how the plain [of Lacedaemonia] was occupied” by “a ‘Lacon’ named Chamaretos”<sup>30</sup>. In this retroactive civic identity discourse, Middle- and Late-Byzantine Spartans represent the “Other” and it is specifically to Sparta that a laboriously built Laconian ancestry common to Monemvasia and Tsaconia is utterly denied<sup>31</sup>.

Such an assessment of Monemvasian civic claims lies beyond the scope of this paper and the same applies to the history of Nicetas Choniates; the sole authority that names Chamaretes as a “tyrant of the Laconians”.

28. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 48-50. Twelfth-century archaising sources evince a contemporary Peloponnesian populace of “Dorians”, i.e., speakers of a “dorian” or “doricising” Greek dialect, commonly identified with the Tsacanians (for the latter, see the following note). Ascribing such a “Dorian” identity to the Monemvsiots Kalligas further proposes that Tsaconia was “a part of the territory of Monemvasia” and cites Ch. P. Symeonidis who, contrariwise, argued that Monemvasia consisted part of a wider Tsaconia. See KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 49 and n. 40. Cf. Ch. P. SYMEONIDES, *Oἱ Τσάκωνες καὶ ἡ Τσακωνιά. Συμβολὴ στὴν ἐρμηνεία τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τοῦ ὀμωνύμου θεσμοῦ τῶν καστροφυλάκων* [Βυζαντινὰ Κείμενα καὶ Μελέται 5], Thessaloniki 1972, 129-138.

29. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 15 (*Chronicle of Monemvasia*) and n. 18, 48-50, 74 n. 10 (Nicephorus Gregoras). In using this correlation Pachymeres precedes Gregoras; see, *Georges Pachymérès. Relations Historiques*, ed. A. FAILLER [CFHB 24.2], Paris 1984, 401.27: ἐκ τῶν Λακώνων, οὓς καὶ Τζάκωνας παραφθείροντες ἔλεγον. An appellative *tzaconiae* (in plural in the *Chronicle of Monemvasia*) must have originally meant any rocky highlands; the proper name *Tzaconia* (a toponym) is first found in the late thirteenth- or fourteenth-century *Chronicle of Morea*; see H. AHRWEILER, *Les termes Τσάκωνες – Τσακωνίαι et leur évolution sémantique*, *REB* 21 (1963), 243-249, *passim*. SYMEONIDES, *Τσάκωνες*, 75 and n. 1, 93-101, 131-133.

30. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 74.

31. For the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* juxtaposing those “indigenous” (or even “noble”?) “Hellenic gentes” settled in Monemvasia with a “mixed” multitude of immigrants transported to Sparta, see I. ANAGNOSTAKIS, Μονεμβασία-Λακεδαίμων: Για μια τυπολογία αντιπαλότητας και για την Κυριακή αργία στις πόλεις, in: *Οι βυζαντινές πόλεις, 8ος-15ος αι. Προοπτικές της έρευνας και νέες ερμηνευτικές προσεγγίσεις*, ed. T. KIOUSOPOULOU, Rethymno 2012, 106-108. See also I. ANAGNOSTAKIS – A. KALDELLIS, The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582-959: Their Creative Engagement with Ancient Literature, *GRBS* 54 (2014), 109-111.

His references to Chamaretus excluded, the historian only uses this ethnic name twice. He once describes a circumvention of “the Laconians” (*τοὺς Λάκωνας*) by a Campanian cavalry contingent galloping out of Argos and reaching Messenia via Achaea in the spring of 1205<sup>32</sup>. In this context the whole of Laconia is implicated by synecdoche and its northern and western extremities matter more than its southeastern tip, where Monemvasia lies. He further argues that Helen of Troy having returned to Sparta adapted once again “to the Laconians’ mores” (*ἐς ἡθη τὰ Λακωνῶν*)<sup>33</sup>, implicitly equating Laconians to the Spartans. On the other hand, Choniates explicitly commemorates the Monemvasiots’ civic identity with regard to their valiantly repelling a siege<sup>34</sup>. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that he utilises a pair of specific categories to indicate ethnically distinct chiefs or chiefdoms. In the tyrants catalogue including Chamaretus he also notes that “holding the Meteora in Thessaly now called Great Vlachia was a toparches [literally, a local archon] of the local population”<sup>35</sup>. Comparably, former empress Margaret of Hungary ruled in the name of a son of hers from her second husband, Boniface of Montferrat, a *toparchia* ceded to the latter<sup>36</sup>. Notably, neither is Chamaretus classed a *toparches* nor his “tyrant state” a *toparchia*<sup>37</sup>.

Kalligas’s over-sophisticated reading regarding a heavily nuanced Nicetas Choniates’s record of Leo Chamaretus seems superfluous where a plain reading suffices. Calling Chamaretus a “tyrant of the Laconians” would hardly serve the purpose of the atticising historian, if he had intended

32. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 610.7-9: *μεθίσταται πρὸς Ἀργος, περιπαπταίνει τοὺς Λάκωνας, ἐς Ἀχαίαν ἐνθεν προσβάλλει, ἐκ τοῦδε τὴν Μεθώνην μετέρχεται καὶ ὁμοί πρὸς Πύλον*. MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 335.

33. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 652.58-61; MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 360.

34. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 73.13-17. Cf. *ibid.*, 442-443.54-59. See also MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 43, 243, respectively; KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 66-67, 69-70, respectively.

35. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 638.49-51: *ἄλλος τις τὰ Θετταλίας κατέχων μετέωρα, ἀ νῦν μεγάλη Βλαχία κικλήσκεται, τοπάρχης ἦν τῶν ἐκεῖ*; MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 350. For this unnamed chief, see CHEYNET, *Pouvoir*, no. 218, 153-154; 463.

36. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 636.63-64: *τὴν δὲ τούτον τοπαρχίαν Μαρίας τῆς ἐκ Παιόνων διαδεξαμένης τῷ λόγῳ τῆς παιδοτοκίας*; MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 349.

37. For the consistent use of these categories by Byzantine authors as far back as Porphyrogenitus, see J.-C. CHEYNET, *Toparque et topotérètes à la fin du 11e siècle*, *REB* 42 (1984), 215-224, *passim* and esp. 215 n. 2.

to signify the assumed Monemvasian origin, and still less an emphatically non-Spartan identity, of the former<sup>38</sup>. As an upper-echelon civil servant in the imperial administration, senior minister under Isaac II, Alexius III and Alexius IV, and president of the senate, Choniates acquired intimate knowledge of state affairs and was even politically embroiled in the 1204 collapse<sup>39</sup>. One would only expect a learned man of such insight to forthrightly accuse Chamaretus of tyranny; after all, the latter's "tyrant state" being carved out of the imperial domain was tantamount to usurping the sole legitimate authority of the Roman emperor. The Laconian subordinates of Chamaretus define by synecdoche the scene of his dissidence – Laconia. The historian actually names in a rhetorical fashion his power base, "plane Lacedaemon", a barely perceived Homeric *topos* (*κοίλη Λακεδαιμονίου*) signifying Sparta<sup>40</sup>. Choniates never meant to ethnically differentiate Chamaretus from the background; if anything, he meant to implicitly define the "tyrant of the Laconians" as a Spartan.

In the historian's mind a man oppressing his fatherland is admittedly condemned, but hardly considered exceptional. Choniates introduces his tyrants catalogue by vituperating those "servile men" which "were consumed by burning ambition against the interest of their own country"<sup>41</sup>. Leo Sgurus, "born in Nauplion", is expressly stated to have "prevailed over his countrymen by force ... filled up the measure of his father and administered his inheritance with bloodshed"<sup>42</sup>. There is also sigillographic record suggesting Chamaretus were a powerful Spartan who came to overtly oppress his fellow citizens around 1204. A lead imprint of a seal reading "[w]ith the seal of Leo Chamaretos, *proedros* of Lacedaemon ...", known for some time and readily ascribed to the "tyrant", has been redated by

38. Cf. SAINT-GUILLAIN, The conquest of Monemvasia, 272-273 n. 94.

39. M. ANGOLD, Byzantine Politics vis-à-vis the Fourth Crusade, in: *Urbs Capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences. La IV<sup>e</sup> Croisade et ses conséquences*, ed. A. LAIOU, Paris 2005, 55-56, 64-66 and n. 84.

40. MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 410 n. 1720. See also A. VASSILIKOPOULOU-IOANNIDOU, «Λακωνία», «Λάκωνες» εἰς τοὺς Βυζαντινοὺς συγγραφεῖς, ΛΣ 4 (1979), 4, 6. For a twelfth-century prelate of Sparta signing as "the sacrificer for the Laconians", see V. LAURENT, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire Byzantin*, vol. 5.2. *L'eglise*, Paris 1965, no. 1600, 431-432.

41. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 637.34-39; MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 350.

42. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 605.65-67; MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 332.

Ch. Stavrakos to either late eleventh or early twelfth century and convincingly attributed to an otherwise unknown prelate of the Lacedaemonian see<sup>43</sup>. Judging from this piece of evidence the Chamareti might have even earlier provided leadership to Sparta<sup>44</sup>, at a crucial juncture of its institutional development – while Alexius I Comnenus was upgrading local bishopric to a metropolitan see.

## II. Lacedaemonia: the metropolis and the *Provintia*

Against the background of any plausible reconstruction of the turn of the thirteenth century subdivision of Peloponnese the 1204 mention of a theme of Lacedaemonia (*Provintia Lakedemonie*) seems highly problematic. Dionysios Zakythinos contemplated the whole peninsula being originally bisected to form the two districts attested in Alexius III's 1198 chrysobull; namely, the *orion* [an exceptional term signifying a distinct fiscal district, latinised *orium* in the 1204 document] *Patron et Methonis* and the *orion Corinthii, Argus et Nauplii*<sup>45</sup>. If this hypothesis holds then Lacedaemonia, considered as a part of the former<sup>46</sup>, can only have been promoted to a fiscal theme in a tightly compressed time frame spanning 1198-1204. Yet Antoine Bon in his 1951 monograph on Byzantine Peloponnese proposed “qu'une bande de territoire allant de l'Achaïe avec Kalavryta au golfe de Laconie et comprenant toute l'Arcadie, constituait une 3e circonscription”<sup>47</sup>. There

43. C. STAVRAKOS, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen aus der Sammlung des Numismatischen Museums Athen* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 4], Wiesbaden 2000, 403-404 (no. 275) and n. 961. For the English version, see SAINT-GUILAIN, The conquest of Monemvasia, 272. See also CHEYNET, *Pouvoir*, no. 217, 152-153 and n. 1. A recent effort to relate it once more to the “tyrant” has been rebuffed; see A. MAZARAKIS, The Lead Bulla of the Despot Ioannis Chamaretos [SBS 11], Berlin – Boston (2012), 112-113; SAINT-GUILAIN, The conquest of Monemvasia, 272-274.

44. SAINT-GUILAIN, The conquest of Monemvasia, 274.

45. For the source, see now POZZA – RAVEGNANI, *Trattati*, no. 11, 130.

46. D. A. ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται περὶ τῆς διοικητικῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς διοικήσεως ἐν τῷ Βυζαντινῷ κράτει, *EEBΣ* 17 (1941), 248. For Byzantine Peloponnese partition trends in a longue durée perspective, see now I. ANAGNOSTAKIS – M. LEONTSINI, The Partitioned Space of Byzantine Peloponnese. From History to Political and Mythical Exploitation, in: *Spatialities of Byzantine Culture from the Human Body to the Universe*, ed. M. VEIKOU – I. NILSSON, Leiden – Boston 2022, 417-418 and fig. 17.1.

47. A. BON, *Le Péloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204*, Paris 1951, 100-101.

is a map of a political division of Peloponnese around 1330 – illustrating Georg Stadtmüller’s chapter on the history of the peninsula uncharitably published in a 1944 military guide book for Nazi occupation forces in Greece – which strikingly resembles such an arrangement<sup>48</sup> (Fig. 1). In fact, even Zakythinos’s fundamental assumption that a higher-rank unified theme comprising Peloponnese and Hellas was exclusively subdivided to *ὅρια*<sup>49</sup> (the plural of Greek *ὅριον*) has been challenged<sup>50</sup>.

While the possibility cannot be ruled out that Lacedaemonia was only established as a distinct fiscal district after 1198, this would hardly explain why both the Peloponnesian *ὅρια* failed to refer to it by name. By contrast, Corinth was explicitly supplemented by Argos and Nauplium in the 1198 entry of the relevant *orion*. The joint mention of two towns situated less than 10 kilometers apart and shepherded by a single bishop represents a formulaic pair harking back, just like Lacedaemonia, to ecclesiastical nomenclature, since by mid twelfth century Nauplium was informally annexed to the title of the Argive prelate<sup>51</sup>. Remarkably, in 1188/89 Emperor Isaac II Angelus awarded the bishopric metropolitan status; a novelty outright refuted by Alexius III<sup>52</sup>. The meticulous formulation of

48. G. STADTMÜLLER, Die Geschichte, in: *Der Peloponnes. Landschaft-Geschichte-Kunststätten. Von Soldaten für Soldaten. Herausgegeben von einem Generalkommando*, ed. H. FELMY, Athens 1944, map 6. Bon was well aware of this study in 1951; see Bon, *Péloponnèse* 175 n. 2, and 35-36 n. 4 citing a map.

49. For the term in context, see *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 595.27. MAGOULIAS, *O City*, 327.

50. In more recent literature the view seems to prevail that they are confined to coastal areas; see GLYKATZI-AHRWEILER, *Recherches sur l’administration*, 77 n. 5; H. AHRWEILER, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles*, Paris 1966, 277; CARILE, *Partitio*, 161; J. HERRIN, *The Social and Economic Structure of Central Greece in the Late Twelfth Century* (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 1972), 104-105 and 105 n. 1-2; MAGDALINO, *Manuel*, 235; NANETTI, *Modalità*, 257-258. For the *orion/orium* as a corruption of Latin *horreum*, cf. D. D. PSYCHOGIOS, Όριον-Ωρεῖον-Πονδικόν, *Ηλειακά* 27 (1978), 812B-814A.

51. V. KONTI, Το Ναύπλιο και οι σχέσεις του με την επισκοπή Άργους κατά τη μέση βυζαντινή περίοδο, *Σύμμεικτα* 15 (2002), 134, 141-142, 145-148.

52. J. DARROUZÈS, Notes inédites de transferts épiscopaux, *REB* 40 (1982), 159.9-12; J. DARROUZÈS, Le traité des transferts: édition critique et commentaire, *REB* 42 (1984), no. 61, 184-185; DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae*, 323 (Not. 10.448 *apparatus*); *Die byzantinischen*

the *orion* name in the 1198 chrysobull may thus bespeak a possibility of jurisdictional confusion due to this short-lived episode of ecclesiastical autonomy. The very fact the imperial chancery considered it worthwhile to dwell on such a transient discrepancy between the strict nominal extent of an *orion* and any metropolitan jurisdictions involved indicates that restructuring metropolitan dioceses may in principle have been relevant to rearranging fiscal boundaries.

Furthermore, the fact that Methoni, a harbour town and bishopric crowning the southwestern tip of the Peloponnese, was mentioned in both the 1198 and 1204 charters alongside its ecclesiastical metropolis, Patras, situated in the northwest, may imply territorial fragmentation rather than cohesion. Notwithstanding Zakythinos's stretching of the westernmost *orion* all the way to the southeast to include Lacedaemonia, both the redactors of the 1198 chrysobull and the compilers of the *Partitio Romanie* refrained from citing Christianopolis, another novel metropolis established only some years before the one of Sparta, around 1080<sup>53</sup>, in Messenia. This omission is all the more surprising, since Christianopolis was virtually sandwiched between

*Kleinchroniken*, ed. P. SCHREINER [CFHB 12.1], vol. 1, Wien 1975, 229 (Chron. 32, 6), 249 (Chron. 33, 33). See also vol. 2, [CFHB 12.2.], Wien 1977, 179-180 commentary; DARROUZÈS, Notes inédites, 163-165 (esp. 164 on such a downgrading being unprecedented), 170; DARROUZÈS, *Le traité*, 211; KONTI, Ναύπλιο, 134, 142-145 and n. 69-70.

53. Christianopolis can be confidently dated after November 9, 1071, and before March 20, 1082; DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae*, 123, esp. No 71, 76 (citing the patriarchal *Regestes*). The line of argument followed by Vitalien Laurent to date the bishopric of Morea to the reign of Nicephorus III Botaneiates (1078-1081) could also be applied to the promotion of Christianopolis, broadly dated by the French sage before Alexius I. See V. LAURENT, L'évêché de Morée (Moréas) du Péloponnèse, *REB* 20 (1962), 183 n. 8, 185-186. See also BON, *Péloponnèse*, 108, 110 and n. 2; É. LIMOUSIN, L'administration byzantine du Péloponnèse (Xe-XIIe siècles), in: *Le Péloponnèse. Archéologie et Histoire*, ed. J. RENARD, Rennes 1999 <<http://books.openedition.org/pur/20635>>, § 17 and n. 33. For its identification with Christianou village, see N. A. BEES, Beiträge zur kirchlichen Geographie Griechenlands im Mittelalter und in der neueren Zeit, *Oriens christianus* 4 (1915), 265-267; BON, *Péloponnèse*, 111-112, 162. A. BON, *La Morée Franque. Recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la Principauté d'Achaïe (1205-1430)*, Paris 1969, vol. 1, 98-99. A church of domed octagon type preserved in Christianou seems to have been lavishly built over an earlier structure at about the time Christianopolis was promoted. See S. VOYADJS - E. DELINIKOLA, Νεότερες παρατηρήσεις στην οικοδομική ιστορία του ναού Μεταμορφώσεως του Σωτήρος Χριστιάνων Μεσσηνίας, *ΔΧΑΕ* 23 (2002), 47-48 and n. 16, 50, 56, 58 (dating).

the southernmost bishoprics such as Methone and a more substantial block of bishoprics clustering around Patras itself to the north.

The novel ecclesiastical province of Lacedaemonia (elevated to metropolis in 1082/83<sup>54</sup>) being carved out of the diocese of Patras, the protestation of the affected metropolitan would be anything but unexpected. In 1084 the patriarch of Constantinople Nicholas III Grammaticus referred to Alexius I Comnenus a plea of the prelate of Patras adducing no less than five chrysobulls<sup>55</sup>. In such a case the plaintiff would further invoke canon 12 of Chalcedon council prohibiting the subtraction of a diocese, while an innovating emperor would fall back to Chalcedon, canon 17, and Quinisext council, canon 38, providing for the creation of episcopal or metropolitan sees to cater for cities founded *ex novo* or reestablished by imperial decree<sup>56</sup>. Patras itself had in fact been promoted to metropolis at Corinth's expense

54. DARROUZÈS, *Notitia*, 325 (Not. 10.493 *apparatus* and note); SCHREINER, *Kleinchroniken*, vol. 1, 227 (Chronicle no. 32, 2); V. LAURENT, La date de l'érection des metropoles de Patras et de Lacedémone, *REB* 21 (1963), 136-139. Cf. E. KISLINGER, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem. Die Chronik von Monembasia und das sizilianische Demenna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie* [Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini 8], Wien 2001, 64.

55. In fact, a rioting faction of the patriarchal clergy had frustrated a council convened in St Sophia in August 1084 to repel the imperial novelties. See RHALLÈS – POTLÈS, vol. 5, 62.13-65.2, 72.9-31 (= PG 119, coll. 864.31 – 865.56 and 868.1-30, 877.49-55 and 880.1-22). See also B. K. STEPHANIDES, Ἡ ὑπὸ τῶν Βυζαντινῶν αὐτοκρατόρων ἀνύψωσις ἐπισκοπῶν καὶ ἀρχιεπισκοπῶν εἰς μητροπόλεις, *Nέος Ποιμὴν* 1 (1919), no. 10, 598-602; H. SARADI, Imperial jurisdiction over ecclesiastical provinces: the ranking of new cities as seats of bishops or metropolitans, in: *To Βυζάντιο κατά τον 12ο αιώνα. Κανονικό δίκαιο, κράτος και κοινωνία* ed. N. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΕΣ, [Εταιρεία Βυζαντινών και Μεταβυζαντινών Μελετών, Διπτύχων Παραφύλλα 3], Athens 1991, 157-159; M. ANGOLD, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261*, Cambridge 1995, 55-56; KISLINGER, *Regionalgeschichte*, 64-5. B. I. PHEIDAS, Ιστορικὴ ἔξελξις τῆς διοικητικῆς ὁργανώσεως τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Πελοποννήσου κατὰ τὴν βυζαντινὴν περίοδο, in: *Πρακτικὰ τοῦ Στ΄ Διεθνοῦ Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακῶν Σπουδῶν, Τρίπολις 24-29 Σεπτεμβρίου 2000* [Πελοποννησιακά, Παράδοτημα 24], vol. 1, Athens 2001-2002, 92-93; D. TH. VACHAVIOLIS, *Η ιστορία της μητρόπολης Λακεδαιμονίας κατά τη βυζαντινή περίοδο* (PhD diss., University of Ioannina, 2014) <<https://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/40869?lang=el#page/1/mode/2up>>, 90-91.

56. RHALLÈS – POTLÈS, vol. 2, 246-250 (on Chalcedon, canon 12), 258-263 (on Chalcedon, canon 17), 392-395 (on Quinisext, canon 38). See also STEPHANIDES, ἀνύψωσις, 596-597; SARADI, Jurisdiction, 153-155; VACHAVIOLIS, *Λακεδαιμονία*, 92.

in early ninth century, and a compiler of the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* strove to justify that novelty by praising the diligence of the emperor Nicephorus I (802-811) “to renovate the cities [situated] there” (*τὰς ἐκεῖσε πόλεις ἀνακαινίσαι*)<sup>57</sup>. Nicephorus had given the metropolitan of Patras three suffragans: the bishop of heavily repopulated “city of Lacedaemon” as well as those of Methone and Corone (?)<sup>58</sup>. Patriarch Nicholas III cautiously stressed Lacedaemonia was among the first three bishoprics subordinated to Patras<sup>59</sup>.

By twelfth century eminent canonists would resent such an imperial liberality towards a novel metropolitan see. A gesture of the kind would amount not only to dividing a diocese but also, more disturbingly, to hierarchically equating a promoted bishop with a senior metropolitan. Church’s concern about inconsiderate elevation of bishoprics already apparent in the fifth-century Chalcedon council had seemingly culminated in a compromise on the eve of Alexius I’s rise to power. Enacting a prerogative to create a new metropolitan see<sup>60</sup>, an emperor should nevertheless refrain from providing any suffragans to the bishop promoted, and was in fact expected to appease the affected metropolitan by creating new suffragans

57. P. LEMERLE, La Chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire, *REB* 21 (1963), 10.61-69; I. DUKČEV, *Cronaca di Monemvasia. Introduzione, testo critico e note* [Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici, Testi e Monumenti, Testi 12], Palermo 1976, 20.173-181 and 22.194-196: *τοῦτο μαθῶν ὁ προειρημένος βασιλεὺς Νικηφόρος...* διὰ φροντίδος ἔθετο τὸ καὶ τὰς ἐκεῖσε πόλεις ἀνακαινίσαι... καὶ μητροπόλεως δίκαια ταῖς Πάτραις παρέσχετο, ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς πρὸ τούτου χρηματιζούσης. Ἀνωκοδόμησε τε ἐκ βάθρων καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν.

58. LEMERLE, La Chronique, 10.70-74; DUKČEV, *Cronaca di Monemvasia*, 22.196-200: *τὴν δὲ Λακεδαιμωνα πόλιν ἐκ βάθρων καὶ αὐτὴν ἀνεγέιρας...* ἐπισκοπὴν καὶ αὐθίς ταύτην κατέστησε καὶ ὑποκείσθαι τῇ τῶν Πατρῶν μητροπόλει ἔθεσπισεν, προσαφιερώσας καὶ ἐτέρας δύο ἐπισκοπάς, τὴν τε Μεθώνην καὶ τὴν Κορώνην. See also VACHAVIOLOS, *Λακεδαιμονία*, 76-77. On Corone being transferred to a more defensible site, see I. ANAGNOSTAKIS, Μετονομασίες-μετοικεσίες. Η περίπτωση της βυζαντινής Κορώνης, in: *Πρακτικά επιστημονικού συνεδρίου (5-7 Αυγούστου 2005)*, Ομηρική Αίπεια-Αρχαία Κορώνη-Πεταλίδι. Παρελθόν, παρόν καὶ μέλλον, Petalidi 2009, 62-64.

59. RHALLES - POTLES, vol. 5, 72.9-31 (= PG 119, col. 880.14-16): *τρισὶν ἐπισκοπαῖς αὐτὴν δωρησαμένου, τῇ Μεθώνῃ, τῇ Λακεδαιμονί, καὶ τῇ Σαρσοκορώνῃ*. On “Sarsocorone” in particular, see below, n. 96.

60. STEPHANIDES, *Ἀνύψωσις*, 590-592; SARADI, *Jurisdiction, passim*.

for him<sup>61</sup>. Summarising Theodore Balsamon's thesis on the subject Michael Angold generalises that "newly promoted metropolitan bishops only enjoyed honorific status: they did not have the right to any suffragans and in matters of jurisdiction remained subordinate to their old metropolitans"<sup>62</sup>. Since Vitalien Laurent suggested that a bishopric was created in Morea by Nicephorus III Botaneiates (1078-1081), an emperor "très particulièrement préoccupé de garantir les intérêts de la métropole de Patras"<sup>63</sup>, right at the time when the new metropolitan see of Christianopolis was being carved out of Patras's diocese<sup>64</sup>, that new bishopric could well be considered a quid pro quo<sup>65</sup>. For his part Patriarch Nicholas III proposed an adequate compensation of the metropolitan of Patras for the loss of Lacedaemonia<sup>66</sup>. Eventually a new bishopric was established in Nikli (successor settlement to ancient Tegea in Arcadia), its prelate archaically fashioned bishop of Amyclium, and subordinated to Patras. It was thenceforth repeatedly stated in the *Notitiae* that Amyclium had been exchanged for Lacedaemonia which, although promoted to metropolitan status, long remained devoid of suffragans<sup>67</sup>.

61. ANGOLD, *Church*, 142.

62. ANGOLD, *Church*, 142 n. 16 (citing Balsamon's comment on Chalcedon, canon 12).

63. LAURENT, Moréas, 185-186.

64. See above, n. 53.

65. In 1222 Pope Honorius III split Christianopolis and the former bishopric (?) of Veligosti between the bishoprics of Methone and Corone; see *Bullarium Hellenicum. Pope Honorius III's Letters to Frankish Greece and Constantinople* (1216-1227), ed. W. O. DOBA – C. D. SCHABEL, Turnhout 2015, Ep. 125 (Dat. March 11, 1222), 310: "mediatatem diocesis ecclesie Christiane, que Grecorum tempore archiepiscopatus extitit"; 311: "ecclesiam Viligurdensem (sic), que, sicut dicitur, Grecorum tempore episcopatus extitit". See also C. SCHABEL, Antelm the Nasty, First Latin Archbishop of Patras (1205 – ca 1241), in: *Medieval Diplomatics in the Eastern Mediterranean 1000-1500: Aspects of Cross-Cultural Communication*, ed. A. D. BEHAMMER – M. G. PARANI – C. SCHABEL [The Medieval Mediterranean 74], Leiden-Boston 2008, 104 and n. 39, 105 and n. 44.

66. RHALLES – POTLES, vol. 5, 72.34 – 73.4 (= PG 119, col. 880.26-32): ὅσαι τῶν ἐπισκοπῶν εἰς μητροπόλεων ἔμελον ἀναβιβασθῆναι κλέος, οὐκ ἄλλως τούτου ἐπέτυχον εἰ μὴ... καὶ ὁ μητροπολίτης τῆς μελλούσης τιμηθῆναι Ἐκκλησίας, ἀντιδόσεις ἀξίας εἰληφάντης βασιλικῆς δεξιᾶς, τοῖς πραττομένοις συνήνεσε. See also LAURENT, Moréas, 185: "C'est certainement contre cette amputation du territoire de la métropole [sc. Patras] que Nicolas III protesta à cette occasion, protestation qui n'eût pas été de saison en cas de compensation par la création d'un nouvel évêché".

67. DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae*, 284 (Not. 7.550 *apparatus* MS F): ἀντὶ Λακεδαιμονίας,

Keeping in mind that both Chalcedon, canon 17, and Quinisext, canon 38, warranted a civic precedent, i.e., the founding or reestablishment of a city, to sanction a bishopric's promotion to metropolitan status (in fact prohibited according to Chalcedon, canon 12), the only too evident territorial aspect of the eleventh- and twelfth-century ecclesiastic disputes indicates that some of the emperors involved may have legalistically complied with the antiquated canons engineering novel fiscal districts. The term *orion/orium* meaning a boundary or, in a more dynamic sense, a border demarcation procedure (?) seems to be used as a terminus technicus appropriate for the remaining core areas of districts reduced, while derivative districts are styled themes (latinised *provinti[ae]*). The name of the Corinthian *orion* explicitly mentioning Argos and Nauplium, i.e., a territory detached from the ancient diocese of Corinth in 1188/89 only to be reattached by 1198 by Alexius III, is positive rather than negative (*e silentio*) testimony of exactly such a manipulation. One would therefore suggest that, by excluding both of the bishoprics promoted to metropolitan status, the very names of the Peloponnesian *δοια* indicate clear-cut territorial distinctions dating back to relevant late eleventh-century upgrades. The *Provintia Lakedemonie* attested in the *Partitio Romanie* but not in the 1198 chrysobull, either way clearly distinct from the *orion/orium* of Patras and Methone known as such to both of the charters, may thus be considered a legalistic devise originally adduced to facilitate Alexius I Comnenus in awarding metropolitan status to the bischopric of Sparta back in 1082/83.

---

Ἀμυκλείου, 326 (Not. 10.497 *apparatus* MSS a): *καὶ ὁ (ἡ) Αμυκλείου ἀντὶ τοῦ (τῆς) Λακεδαιμονίας*. According to the 1222 letter of Pope Honorius III (see above, n. 65), Amyclium had been “subtracted by the church of Lacedaemonia in the times of the disobedience of the Greeks” (*ecclesiae Lacedaemonensi Grecorum tempore ab inobedientibus subtracta*), i.e., before 1204. Though it may refer to well-known developments subsequent to the late thirteenth-century reestablishment of a metropolitan of Lacedaemonia in Mistra (Myzithras), a vague phrasing of a patriarchal synod's decree dated 1340 has sometimes been taken to imply that Amyclium and two more bishoprics, Pissa and Ezera, had already been subordinated to Lacedaemonia by late eleventh century. See E. KISLINGER, Ἀμύκλιον, ἐπισκοπὴ τῆς μητροπόλεως Λακεδαιμονίας; *Bυζαντινὰ Μελέται* 2 (1990), 82-83 and n. 46 (Amyclium originally subordinated to Patras?), 83 n. 47 (papal letter of 1222), and *passim*. VACHAVIOLOS, *Λακεδαιμονία*, 264-265, 284, 305-306.

### III. Lacedaemonia in the 1204 context

Provided such an early Comnenian establishment of a fiscal theme (*Provintia*) of Lacedaemonia, important insights into Byzantine politics may be gained by surveying any rationales for its disappearance and reappearance apparent in turn of the thirteenth century documents. In fact a remarkable observation made by Oikonomides and supplemented by Savvides is that neither did Lacedaemonia coexist with the *orion Corinthii*, *Argus* et *Nauplii* in Alexius III's 1198 chrysobull, mentioning the latter, nor in the *Partitio Romanie*, mentioning the former<sup>68</sup>. Oikonomides also implied that Lacedaemonia's mention in the 1204 document must be taken as an indication of Leo Chamaretus's loyalty to Alexius IV<sup>69</sup>, son and co-emperor of restored Isaac II, while Savvides suggested that Chamaretus had already become a dissident during the reign of Alexius III<sup>70</sup>. One ends up with an impression of a loyalism oscillating between the *nuclei* of later-to-be tyrant polities of southeastern and northeastern Peloponnese. Set against the protracted legitimacy crisis spanning 1195-1204 this distinctly chiastic pattern could well imply that local leaders across the eastern Peloponnese aligned themselves with the opposing factions of the ruling Angelii dynasty: the Alexians (*φιλαλέξιοι*), i.e., those sympathising with Alexius III's regime, and the Isaacians (*φιλισαάκιοι*), i.e., the devotees of Isaac II<sup>71</sup>.

Centripetally motivated local tensions in Peloponnese may be first detected in the writings of Michael Choniates, Nicetas's elder brother and metropolitan of Athens. In about 1200 an unnamed schemer caused Michael Choniates much anxiety lest he might share the dire sufferings of a prelate of Argos<sup>72</sup>. He implied that this foe was related to the Isthmus of

68. OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 17: “Notamment, dans le Péloponnèse la *Partitio* ignore l'*horion* de Corinthe, Argos et Nauplie qui est mentionné dans le chrysobulle de 1198, mais elle ajoute le thème de Lacédémone (*provincia Lacedemonie*) attesté ici pour la première fois.” SAVVIDES, Χαμάρετος, 356-357 [227-228].

69. See above, n. 21.

70. See above, n. 22.

71. For the names of the factions, see *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 448.8-9 *apparatus*: *καὶ* *ώς πλείονές εἰσι φιλαλέξιοι μᾶλλον ἢπερ φιλισαάκιοι*. Cf. *ibid.*, 485.18; *Nicetae Choniatae Orationes et Epistulae*, ed. I. A. VAN DIETEN [CFHB 3], Berlin – New York 1972, 62.23, 102.8-9.

72. *Michaelis Choniatae Epistulae*, ed. F. KOLOVOU [CFHB 41], Berlin – New York 2001, no. 75.22-23.

Corinth and enjoyed the patronage of Michael Stryphnus, Alexius III's co-brother and Grand Duke, i.e., a Lord High Admiral of sorts and imperial governor of Central Greece and Peloponnese<sup>73</sup>. This shadowy figure, commonly identified with Leo Sgurus<sup>74</sup>, is in fact called *πανυπέρτυμος*<sup>75</sup>; a honorific style consistently used by this writer for addressing his fellow ecclesiastical dignitaries<sup>76</sup>. For his part Nicetas Choniates avowes that Leo Sgurus sustained a siege masterminded by a prelate of Corinth who was supported by imperial naval units<sup>77</sup>. This may well be taken to suggest that this metropolitan rather than Leo Sgurus was connected with the upper echelon of the Alexian regime; namely, Stryphnus<sup>78</sup>.

Notwithstanding that later Leo Sgurus took revenge by brutally killing the Corinthian prelate –at last called by name: Nicolas<sup>79</sup>–, the part the former played before 1203 seems to be quite overrated. The one concrete piece of evidence is that by the time the 1198 chrysobull to Venice was being drafted a certain Sgurus (Leo?) was authorised to extract naval taxes from the Athenians, arousing Michael Choniates's protest<sup>80</sup>. On the other hand, the Argive prelate referred to by Michael Choniates may be feasibly

73. S. G. GEORGIU, Η απονομή των τίτλων του σεβαστούπερτάτου και του δεσπότη στον άρχοντα του Ναυπλίου Λέοντα Σγουρό (περίπου 1200-1208), in: *Φιλοτιμία. Τιμητικός τόμος για την ομήτην καθηγήτρια Αλκμήνη Σταυρίδου-Ζαφράκη*, ed. ΤΗ. KORRES – P. KATSONI – I. LEONTIADES – A. GKOUTZIUKOSTAS, Thessaloniki 2011, 216-217 and n. 44-45.

74. VLACHOPOULOU, *Σγουρός*, 46-48; GEORGIU, *Σγουρός*, 216-218 and n. 44.

75. *Michaelis Choniatae Epistulae*, no. 77.19.

76. *Michaelis Choniatae Epistulae*, no. 73.2; no. 85.2, 11; no. 86.2, 14; no. 90.8; no. 91.3; no. 138.3; no. 153.41.

77. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 606.94-2.

78. Vlachopoulou, while needlessly redoubling a single military episode only attested by Nicetas Choniates, correctly pinpoints the apparent collaboration of the prelate and Stryphnus; see VLACHOPOULOU, *Σγουρός*, 55-57.

79. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 611.30-35 *apparatus*, 638.55-61.

80. VLACHOPOULOU, *Σγουρός*, 45-47; GEORGIU, *Σγουρός*, 213-215. Several more Sguri are attested in manuscripts and seals; see, *Actes de Lavra*, vol. 1. *Des origines à 1204*, ed. P. LEMERLE – A. GUILLOU – N. SVORONOS – D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU [Archives de l'Athos 5], no. 37.1, no. 67.102, 107, 115, no. 68.11, 16, 50, 54 – the last two, dated 1196, referring to an imperial secretary and a secretary in the department of maritime taxation; *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου*. vol. 1, *Αὐτοκρατορικά*, ed. E. L. VRANOSSI, Athens 1980, no. 48.225; STAVRAKOS, *Familiennamen*, nos. 228-229.

identified with the one promoted by Isaac II's favour to metropolitan only to be downgraded by Alexius III<sup>81</sup>. The metropolitan of Corinth both affected by this innovation –presumably one of several unnamed schemers who kindled Isaac II's rage in 1193 reclaiming metropoles newly created by imperial decree<sup>82</sup>– and vindicated by the overthrown, Alexius III, may equally well be identified with Nicolas; arguably, an ever-irredentist Alexian client of Stryphnus. Leo Sgurus's subsequent robber conquests of Argos and Corinth are mentioned in one breath with his campaign north of the Isthmus<sup>83</sup>, which could only have been undertaken once August 1203 palatial coup restored Isaac II to his imperial dignity<sup>84</sup>. By then Alexius III had deserted Constantinople and Sgurus could be seen as an unrepentant Alexian rallying to the fugitive emperor. When they eventually met Alexius III felt compelled to marry to him his last-born daughter<sup>85</sup> and, perhaps, even to designate him heir apparent to his imperial claim ( $\delta\epsilon\sigma\pi\sigma\tau\eta\nu$ )<sup>86</sup>.

The testimonies of both Choniates compined suggest that the Sguri of Nauplium were already by 1198 involved in lucrative tax collecting (or tax farming) as far as Athens and later threatened by a militand Corinthian prelate flanked by no other than Stryphnus. A deeply rooted Alexian loyalism seems to have been the only thing in common between those bitterly antagonising foci. This self-sufficient analysis complies with the interpretation proposed by Oikonomides, providing an adequate context for both omitting this *orion* in the *Partitio Romanie* and citing it in the 1198 chrysobull. Furthermore, a figure of speech used by Michael Choniates in his opprobrium probably aimed at Nicolas of Corinth can be taken to

---

81. See above, n. 52.

82. Theodore Balsamon in RHALLES – POTLES, vol. 2, 248. See also STEPHANIDES, Ανύψωσις, 603-604. DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae*, 135; SARADI, Imperial jurisdiction, 160-161. ANGOLD, *Church*, 125.

83. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 605.70-75.

84. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 606.10-13.

85. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 608.47-51.

86. Άνωνύμου Σύνοψις Χρονική, ed. K. N. SATHAS, [Bibliotheca Graeca Medii Aevi 7], Venice – Paris 1894, 453.25-28. For this work, formerly attributed to Theodore Scutariotes, see now R. MACRIDES, *George Acropolites. The History. Introduction, translation and commentary*, Oxford 2007, 66-71. For a discussion of this reference, see now GEORGIOU, Σγουρός, 206-213, 219.

imply a threat from a different quarter. The metropolitan paraphrases a Greek proverb naming Sparta, of all lands, to emphasise that his Isthmian foe ought to have been more attentive to the Peloponnesians<sup>87</sup>. All things considered, the learned prelate may have implied that mighty Nicolas of Corinth –who used sheer force to subdue Sgurus– should rather have taken military action to rectify a Spartan threat impending over Peloponnesian.

An Isaacian stance of the house of Chamareti would certainly warrant Lacedaemonia's omission of Alexius III's 1198 chrysobull, and there is some internal evidence in the *Partitio* for exactly such a rupture. Two intriguing entries immediately follow the *Provintia Lakedemonie* in the 1204 text: *Kalobrita* (modern-day Kalavryta) and *Ostrovos*<sup>88</sup>. These unattested in Alexius III's 1198 chrysobull locales are indeed as much of a novelty as a theme of Lacedaemonia. Furthermore, there is hardly any justification in the context for the whole three of them being recorded consecutively. While Kalavryta is much nearer to Patras than to Sparta, a miscellany of non-Peloponnesian places intervenes between its citing alongside Laconia and the entry of the *orium Patron et Methonis* in the very same chapter of the 1204 document<sup>89</sup>. Perhaps this very eccentricity inspired Bon's idea of

87. Michaelis *Choniatae Epistulae*, no. 75.18-23: *πολλοὶ γὰρ οἱ βασιάνοντες καὶ πολεμοῦντες ἀπὸ ὑψους, καὶ μάλιστα οἱ μὴ στέργοντες ἀν ἔλαχον Σπάρταν, μηδ' ἀγαπῶντες τοῖς ἐντὸς Ἰσθμοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἐπιλαμβανόμενοι, οἱ καὶ Ἀθήνας ἄλλοτε ἄλλαις δραστηρίοις δυνάμεσι μνηστεύοντο δι' αὐτῶν, καὶ ἡμᾶς τὰ παραπλήσια τῷ πολυτλήμονι Ἀργοὺς δρασείοντες and *apparatus historicus*; 382, 384-385 (*Index locorum*). For the proverb and its use by Michael Choniates, see C. PREISER, Ein Euripides-Vers (Tel. Fr. 8 P, [723 N<sup>2</sup>]) als Sprichwort bis zu Erasmus von Rotterdam, *Philologus* 144 (2000), 197-198. The addressee of this letter, Theodore Irenicus, run the government of Alexius III; see *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* 492-493.50-62. The commentators date it at about the year 1200 or slightly later; see *Μιχαὴλ Ἀκομινάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου τὰ σωζόμενα*, ed. S. P. LAMBROS, Athens 1879-1880, vol. 2, 585, 592-594. G. STADTMÜLLER, Michael Choniates. Metropolit von Athen (ca. 1138 – ca. 1222), *OC* 33 (1934), 125-325 [= *seriatim* No. 91, 3-203], esp. 251-252 [129-130] (No. 75). J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen zu den Reden und Briefen nebst einer Biographie* [Supplementa Byzantina 2], Berlin – New York 1971, 175-176; F. Ch. KOLOVOU, *Μιχαὴλ Χωνιάτης. Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτη τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ ἔργου του. Τὸ Corpus τῶν ἐπιστολῶν* [Πονήματα 2, Ἀκαδημία Ἀθηνῶν], Athens 1999, 146-147, 176 (no. 75).*

88. CARILE, *Partitio*, 219.47-48: *Kalobrita. Ostrovos*.

89. Within this part the list shifts unexpectedly from Attican *Oreos* and several insular (West Aegean and South Ionian) entries to a corrupt (?) sequence indicating locales in

an administrative district stretching from Kalavryta to the Laconian Gulf<sup>90</sup>. An arrangement of the sort seems, however, extravagant, given that the highlands of Azania where Kalavryta is situated are actually adjacent to Patras's own territory<sup>91</sup>.

Ecclesiastically, this secluded area may as often as not have been subjected to Patras. To be sure, Kalavryta could not have been a particular bishopric before 1204, the place-name first attested in the *Partitio*<sup>92</sup>. Once possibly subjected to the Justinianic-era bishopric of Aegium<sup>93</sup>, the highlands were eventually given to the bishopric of Kernitza founded *ex novo* by the mid tenth century<sup>94</sup>. By 1180 Kalavryta was certainly part of the metropolitan

---

Southern Albania. See CARILE, *Partitio*, 219.49-56. For these entries, see *ibid.*, 258-259 (and references therein). See also OIKONOMIDÈS, *Décomposition*, 20 n. 47.

90. See above, n. 47.

91. The late-mediaeval territory of Patras is commonly believed to have been delineated to the west of the river Vostitza (i. e., the ancient and modern Selinous), roughly along the boundary of the modern administrative district termed eparchia; see *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des lateinischen Erzbistums Patras*, ed. E. GERLAND, [Alma Mater Jenensis, Scriptores Sacri et Profani 5], Leipzig 1903, 77-78. BON, *Morée*, vol. 1, 455-457; H. SARANTIS-MENDELLOVICI, *À propos de la ville de Patras aux 13e-15e siècles*, *REB* 38 (1980), 222.

92. For its identification with ancient Cynaetha, see G. Z. ALEXOPOULOU, *Συμβολή στην αρχαιολογία και τοπογραφία της Αζανίας (βόρειας Αρκαδίας). Επαρχία Καλαβρύτων* (PhD diss., University of Thessaly, 2009) <<https://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/27848?lang=el#page/1/mode/2up>>, vol. 1, part 2, 393-401.

93. For Aegium, see E. CHRYSOS, *Die Bischofslisten der V. Ökumenischen Konzils* (553) [Antiquitas Reihe 1, Abhandlungen zur Alten Geschichte 14], Bonn 1966, 20.104, 30.103, 136 and 137 n. 35, 148, 189; C. PIETRI, *La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'Église de Rome (Ve-VIe siècles)*, in: *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin. Actes du colloque de Rome (12-14 mai 1982)* [Publications de l'École française de Rome 77], Rome 1984, 52 n. 112. For another bishopric in the vicinity, centred in the late antique settlement of Cleitor (Clitorium), see M. PETRITAKI, *Κλείτωρ. Η πόλη υπό το φως των ανασκαφών. Γενική θεώρηση ανασκαφικών δεδομένων*, in: *Ancient Arcadia, Papers from the third International Seminar on Ancient Arcadia, held at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 7-10 May 2002*, ed. E. ØSTBY, Athens 2005, 359. ALEXOPOULOU, *Αζανία*, vol. 1, part 2, 445. For both these bishoprics, see also DARROUZÈS, *Notitiae*, 244 (Not. 3.733, 754 and *apparatus*).

94. G. ZACOS - J. W. NESBITT, *Byzantine Lead Seals* [Τετράδια Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης 3], Berne 1984, vol. 1, 165 (No. 267); vol. 2, pl. 32 (No. 267); A. I. LAMBROPOULOU - A. G. MOUTZALI, *Νέα στοιχεῖα γιὰ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν Κερονίτζας*, in: *Πρακτικὰ Δ' Διεθνοῦς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακῶν Σπουδῶν, Κόρινθος 9-16 Σεπτ. 1990* [Πελοποννησιακά,

jurisdiction of Patras<sup>95</sup> encompassing Tarsus (ancient Pheneus) further to the east – presumably the bishopric of Sarsocorone or Tarsocorone mentioned by patriarch Nicholas III in his 1084 letter to Alexius I<sup>96</sup>. The bishopric of Zemenus, adjacent to the one of Tarsus, was part of the metropolitan jurisdiction of Corinth<sup>97</sup> (Fig. 2). To reach Lacedaemonia from Kalavryta one had to take a different direction and to cover a far greater distance crossing the whole Peloponnese from the northwest to the southeast via Nikli (Fig. 3), which was also subordinated to Patras's metropolis. Set against the background of this rather antiquated ecclesiastic jurisdictions' map, the novel citing of Kalavryta in the *Partitio Romanie* could well have meant to emphasise an actual, fiscal or even political, detachment of Azanian highlands from the *orium Patron et Methonis*.

The second entry following Lacedaemonia is *Ostrovos*, a place-name of Slavonic origin meaning island, anything but rare in mediaeval Greece<sup>98</sup>. A

Παράρτημα 19], vol. 2, Athens 1992–1993, 375–376; C. G. CHOTZAKOGLOU, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte, Architektur und Wandmalerei der Klosterkirche Mega-Spelaion auf der Peloponnes* (Ph.D diss., University of Vienna, 1997), <<https://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/12834#page/1/mode/2up>>, vol. 1, 74–75 and n. 35; A. I. LAMBROPOULOU, Η άσκηση της κρατικής πολιτικής στην Πελοπόννησο κατά τον 9ο-10ο αιώνα: η περίπτωση της Κερνίτζας, in: *International Symposium in honour of Emeritus Professor George Velenis. Thessaloniki, Amphitheatre of Ancient Agora. 4-7 October 2017. Proceedings*, vol. 1, Athens 2021, 213–224, *passim*.

95. DARROUZÈS, *Notitia*, 142, 148, 362 (Not. 13.542).

96. See above, n. 59. For the identification of this bishopric, see M. S. KORDOSES, Η άρχαία άρχαδική πόλη Κορώνη καὶ ἡ βυζαντινὴ Σαρσοκορώνη (Γ' αἰ. π.Χ. – Θ' αἰ. μ.Χ.), *Δωδώνη* 16 (1987), no. 2, 243–251, *passim*. See also ANAGNOSTAKIS, Κορώνη, 51–53.

97. DARROUZÈS, *Notitia*, 282 (Not. 7.494), 302 (Not. 9.377), 323 (Not. 10.447), 361 (Not. 13.443). For its location, see KORDOSES, Σαρσοκορώνη, 246–247, and 251 (map). See also BON, *Péloponnèse*, 40–41 (map), and 107; BON, *Morée*, vol. 1, 478 n. 5; vol. 2, pl. 6 (map); M. LEONTSINI – A. PANOPOLOU, Ἐκκλησιαστικὲς μεταβολὲς καὶ μοναστικὲς δραστηριότητες στὴν Κορινθία (10ος αἰ.). Η περίπτωση τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Ζεμενοῦ, in: *Πρακτικὰ 1ον Συνεδρίου Κορινθιακῶν Σπουδῶν: Ἰστορικὰ Κορινθιακὰ Μοναστήρια, Κόρινθος 5-7 Μαΐου 2006*, Korinthos 2009, 147–149, 152–153. For a different location, cf. P. YANNOPOULOS, *Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin: un souvenir des invasions Avaro-Slaves*, *Byz.* 63 (1993), 390 (map); P. KOMATINA, *Osnivanje Patraske i Atinske mitropolije i Sloveni na Peloponezu*, *ZRVI* 46 (2009), 45 and n. 97.

98. M. VASMER, *Die Slaven in Griechenland* [Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse 12], Berlin 1941 (Leipzig 1970), 95 (no. 91), 127 (no. 16).

well-known Byzantine castle and bishopric by the same name was situated on a little island off the shores of Lake Vegoritida in modern-day Western Macedonia region, which came to be known as “Lake Ostrovo”<sup>99</sup>. Were this Macedonian Ostrovo identified with the 1204 entry, it would intervene in a rather incongruous way between preceding Peloponnesian entries (Lacedaemonia and Kalavryta) and the following ones situated on the island of Euboea. Acceding to this identification J. Longnon ended up with a map showing a Venetian enclave totally surrounded by the bulk of the Macedonian territories assigned to the Crusaders (Fig. 3)<sup>100</sup>. Furthermore, lake-side Ostrovo lies between two sites identified with Moliscus and Moglena of a *Provincia Moliscu et Moglenon* duly noted in the *Partitio Romanie*<sup>101</sup>: Pyrgoi Kozanis<sup>102</sup> and Chrysi of the modern-day Almopia district (eparchia)<sup>103</sup>, respectively (Fig. 4).

99. H. GELZER, *Ungedruckte und wenig bekannte Bistümerverzeichnisse der orientalischen Kirche II*, *BZ* 2 (1893), 42.25-26; *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. I. THURN [CFHB 5], Berlin - N. York 1973, 345.20-23, 428.84; *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. D. R. REINSCH - A. KAMBYLIS [CFHB 40.1], Berlin 2001, vol. 1, 153.77; DARROUZÈS, *Notitia*, 152 n. 2, 372 (Notitia 13.842, col. 2: ὁ Στροβῶν); Georges Pachymérès, vol. 1, 151.12: *Βόστρον, ἔλλιμνον νῆσον*. For a different Ostrovo mentioned by Cedrenus and sought around Amphipolis, see S. KYRIAKIDES, Βυζαντιναὶ μελέται V. Σύμμεικτα, *Ἐπιστημονικὴ ἐπετηρὸς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης* 3 (1939), 520-523. See also S. KYRIAKIDES, book review of P. LEMERLE, *Philippe et la Macédoine orientale à l'époque chrétienne et byzantine. Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie. Texte* [Bibliothèques des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, Fasc. 158], Paris 1945, in: *Μακεδονικὰ* 2 (1941-1952), 704.

100. LONGNON, *Problèmes*, 80 (map), 81 n. 2. See also TAFEL, *Symbolarum*, Part 2, 89 (No. 22; TAFEL - THOMAS, vol. 1, 468-469 n. 10. MENKE, *Hand-Atlas*, map 86; CARILE, *Partitio*, 256 n. 466.

101. CARILE, *Partitio*, 221.104-105: *Provincia Moliscu et Moglenon*. Cf. POZZA - RAVEGNANI, *Trattati*, no 11, 130: *provincia Prilapi et Pelagonie ac Molyscii, nec non et Mogrenon*. See also M. KRAVARI, *Villes et villages de Macédoine occidentale*, Paris 1989, 39-40; A. STAVRIDOU-ZAFRAKA, Η Δυτική Μακεδονία τον 13ο αι. Παρατηρήσεις από το έργο του Δημητρίου Χωματηνού, in: *Μακεδονία. Ιστορία και Πολιτισμός. Διημερίδα (20-21 Οκτωβρίου 1995)*, Thessaloniki 1999, 36 and map in p. 43 = A. STAVRIDOU-ZAFRAKA, *Βυζάντιο 13ος αιώνας. Από την κατάρρευση στην ανασυγκρότηση. Κράτος της Ηπείρου - Αυτοκρατορία της Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessaloniki 2016, no. XVI.

102. N. K. MOUTSOUPOULOS, Το Κάστρο του Μολισκού, *Byzantiaka* 14 (1994), 163-172. Cf. CARILE, *Partitio*, 279; KRAVARI, *Macédoine occidentale*, 302.

103. D. EVGENIDOU, Κάστρο Χρυσής, *ΑΔ* 40 (1985), vol. 2, 248-249, and pl. 106. EVGENIDOU, Κάστρο Χρυσής, *ΑΔ* 41 (1986), vol. 2, 159-163, and pl. 118. D. EVGENIDOU, To

Tafel had cautiously refrained from locating the 1204 entry of Ostrovo anywhere outside Peloponnese<sup>104</sup> and Zakythinos keenly observed that a placename *Strovizi*, meaning “little Ostrovo”, was mentioned in a fifteenth-century catalogue of Peloponnesian castles<sup>105</sup>. In fact, mention of a Peloponnesian rural settlement named “*Strovistzi*” (*κόμης* [sic] λεγομένης τὸ Στροβίστζη) is already made in a Greek manuscript dated 1281/82<sup>106</sup>. This alternative identification was in fact entertained by Carile<sup>107</sup>, who reckoned both Strovizi (located in modern-day Lepreo) and Kalavryta laid beyond the hinterland of the *orium Patron et Methonis*. Despite Methoni’s mention in the title, Carile maintained that the main body of this *orium* must be sought out in northwestern Peloponnese; being explicitly distinguished from the mountainous Arcadian heartland of the peninsula<sup>108</sup>, it was apparently

---

κάστρο της Χρυσής και το Θέμα των Μογλενών, in: *Αμητός. Τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Μανόλη Ανδρόνικο*, vol. 1, Thessaloniki 1987, 325-342, and pl. 70-71. D. EVGENIDOU, Ανασκαφές στη βυζαντινή Κεντρική και Δυτική Μακεδονία, Σέρβια και Μογλενά, *To Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη* 1 (1987), 63-69. D. EVGENIDOU, Servia and Moglena. Two Byzantine Cities of Macedonia, *Istorioukogewaφaφiká* 2 (1988), 15-19. KRAVARI, *Villes*, 82-83, and map 10; G. STALIDIS, Κάστρο Μογλενών. Νεότερες έρευνες και παρατηρήσεις, in: *Symposium in honour of G. Velenis*, vol. 2, 911-924.

104. TAFEL, *Symbolarum*, Part 2, 89 (no. 22).

105. ZAKYTHINOS, Μελέται... Partitio, 206 n. 1. For the later source adduced by Zakythinos, see K. HOPF, *Chroniques Gréco-Romanes inédits ou peu connues publiées avec notes et tables généalogiques*, Berlin 1873, 202 (anno 1463), 206 (anno 1467); W. MCLEOD, Castles of the Morea in 1467, *BZ* 65 (1972), 356.30, 361.

106. BON, *Morée*, vol. 1, 371 n. 5, 389-390 n. 3. For the source, see V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Catalogus Codicum Graecorum Sinaiticorum*, Oxford 1886, 264 (No. 275); I. SAKELLION, Πατμιακὴ Βιβλιοθήκη ἵτοι ἀναγραφὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ βιβλιοθήκῃ τῆς κατὰ τὴν νῆσον Πάτμου γεραρᾶς καὶ βασιλικῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ἀγίου Ἀποστόλου καὶ Εὐαγγελιστοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου τεθησαυρισμένων χειρογράφων τευχῶν, Athens 1890, no. 275, p. 141-142; N. A. BEES, Βυζαντινὰ ἐπιγραφὰ Γορτυνίας, *VV* 11 (1904), 64-65 (= N. A. BEES, *Βυζαντινὰ ἐπιγραφὰ Γορτυνίας*, μεθ' ὑπομνημάτων ἐκδιδόμεναι (offprint from *VV* 11), St. Petersburg 1904, 4-5).

107. CARILE, Partitio, 256-257.

108. CARILE, Partitio, 161: “Del Peloponneso ricevettero tutta la costa nord-occidentale, da Patrai fino a Methone e, all’interno, un retroterra che presumibilmente si estendeva da Calavrita fino a Ostrovo... (escludendo l’Arcadia)”. See also NANETTI, Modalità, 257-258: “«*Kalobrita...*» e «*Ostrovos...*», cioè una porzione non ben delimitabile del retroterra della costa occidentale (Arcadia esclusa), e tutta la costa nord-occidentale, da Patrasso fino a Methone definita come *Orium... Patron et Methonis*”.

meant to roughly coincide with modern-day administrative departments of Achaea and Elis. A map illustrating Carile's hypotheses would thus radically differ from the one that Bon had in mind suggesting a neatly trisectioned Peloponnese (cf. Fig. 1-2).

Yet, in fact, Bon and Carile envision intrinsically similar arrangements. The latter cast the westernmost *orion* out of a territorial mould which, if considered coherent, would vastly coincide with the disproportionate third Peloponnesian district proposed by the former. They both seem to adduce Kalavryta as a demarcation point upon an orderly plotted map of interlocking jurisdictions. What these institutionally minded approaches fail to assess is a strong possibility of territorial disarray due to actual violent confrontations between local champions of the opposing court factions. Rather than random scraps from incidental reshapings of the *orium Patron et Methonis*, Kalavryta and Ostrovo/Strovizi may have come to the fore as marchlands between hostile territorial blocks, claimed or perchance detached by force by Isaacian Chamareti during the reign of Alexius III. According to Oikonomides's view that the *Partitio* stated only provinces loyal to Constantinople after Isaac II's restoration because of its compilers having specifically drawn on September 1203 tax revenue accounts<sup>109</sup>, the regime change may provide historical context for a politically charged notice of areas lost by the westernmost *orion* to eventually rehabilitated Lacedaemonia.

The main effort of the Chamareti seems to have been directed to the west and Alexius III may have tried to arrest its progress by involving some of the most powerful figures of the imperial establishment to the defense of the compromised district of Patras. Great estates across the *orium Patron et Methonis*, both latinised *episkepsis* (from the original Greek ἐπίσκεψις) and translated *pertinentia* in the 1204 text<sup>110</sup>, were awarded to members of the Vranas and Cantacuzenus families probably related to two out of the five leading Alexian conspirators who brought him to power in 1195. Other estates styled *villa* were endowed to his first-born daughter Irene, who was first married to a Contostephanus and, after his untimely demise, remarried to a scion of the Palaeologus family, presumably related to another chief

---

109. OIKONOMIDÈS, Décomposition, 11-12, 21-22.

110. CARILE, Partitio, 219.45-46: *micra et megali episkepsis, i(d est) parva et magna pertinentia.*

1195 conspirator<sup>111</sup>. K. Smyrlis persuasively argues that such concessions of imperial land regularly including fiscal revenues “were not simply gifts made to secure the loyalty of the beneficiaries, but were primarily payments to ensure the performance of the administrative and military functions entrusted to the officials concerned”<sup>112</sup>. Once the Alexians seized power, they acquired both imperial land and offices readily adhering to a long-established tradition tracing back to Alexius I Comnenus; a practice interweaving state policies with private interests of a formidable aristocracy attached to the ruling dynasty through a network of marriage alliances. Accordingly, Alexius III’s dense land-grands across the *orium Patron et Methonis* may have intended to foster the local defense of the northwestern Peloponnese plain by systematically connecting eminent families to the region while providing them the means for substantial mercenary recruitments.

#### IV. Campanian knights’ employment and political emergence

In 1204 the dynastic civil war of the Angelis was swept away by the whirlwind it sowed calling in the Fourth Crusade. The year had hardly begun when both the co-emperors, already removed from office by yet another coup, were eliminated<sup>113</sup>. In the night of the 12th to 13th of April Constantinople finally succumbed to the Crusaders. In autumn Alexius III’s and Leo Sgurus’s allied forces deployed at Tempe gorge were outflanked and retreated in disarray; the fugitive emperor was forced to surrender himself and his imperial regalia to Boniface of Montferrat<sup>114</sup>. Compensated for his failure as a candidate for

111. CARILE, Partitio, 219.57-59: *Orium Patron et Methonis cum omnibus suis <pertinentiis>*, *iscilicet pertinentia de Brana, pertinentia de Catacoçino, et cumvillis Kyre Herinis, filie imperatoris Kyri Alexii; Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 451.70-72, 458.41-42, 485.7-8, 508.79-80.

112. K. SMYRLIS, The Fiscal Revolution of Alexios I Komnenos: Timing, Scope, and Motives, *TM* 21/2 (2017), 610.

113. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 561.33 – 562.41 (a rebellious rally on January 25, 1204), 562.63-66 (Isaac II’s death throes), 563.70 – 564.5 (Alexius V Ducas’s coup), 564.14-19 (Alexius IV strangled).

114. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 600.58-62, 604.49-59 (Tempe outflanked; Larissa occupied), 612.41-5 (Alexius III surrenders). *Ephraem Aenii Historia Chronica*, ed. O. LAMPSIDES, [CFHB 27], Athenis 1990, 260-261, ll. 7345-7351. For the imperial regalia being forwarded forthwith to Constantinople and received there before November 11, 1204, see *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 118 (§ 309-310).

the imperial throne with a vast seigniory centered on Thessalonica<sup>115</sup>, Boniface recognised the suzerainty of his successful opponent, Baldwin of Flanders and Hainault, first Latin emperor of Constantinople. Indeed, marching undeterred to the south, he overwhelmed various districts across Hellas, invaded in spring, 1205, Peloponnese, and besieged Sgurus's strongholds: Acrocorinth and Nauplium<sup>116</sup>.

Meanwhile, by autumn 1204, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the young Campanian knight leading a cavalry squadron of mediocre proportions back from Syria moored, all but shipwrecked, at the diametrically opposed end of Peloponnese. His early doings in the peninsula are vividly recorded in the chronicle of his namesake uncle, the marshal of the Latin empire of Constantinople<sup>117</sup>. While wintering in Methone Geoffrey was approached by

115. The Crusader chronicles are permeated by highly problematic references to a “realm of Thessalonica” already existing in 1204. Contemporaneous diplomatic and sigillographic materials thoroughly scrutinised by B. Ferjančić indicate such a polity was only established in 1209; with Boniface being killed in action, his infant heir was the first to be crowned. Ferjančić keenly remarked the references at issue mainly focused on the germinal stage of Crusaders’ internal negotiations concerning Thessalonica while Oikonomides (failing to mention the Serb sage) argued they reflected Alexius III’s imperial rule persisting in the spring of 1204 across the territories eventually assigned to Boniface. See B. FERJANČIĆ, Počeci Solunske kraljevine (1204-1209), *ZRVI* 8 (1964), no. 2, 104-105; OIKONOMIDES, Décomposition, 17. See also SETTON, *Papacy*, 21A and n. 86. For some relevant, yet definitely later references in the Venetian chronicles’ tradition, cf. A. CARILE, *La cronachistica veneziana (secoli XIII-XVI) di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204*, Firenze 1969, 186, 189, 196, 301.20-22, 513.50-51.

116. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 600-601.62-65, 605.62-63 (Sgurus deserts Thermopylae), 609.74 – 610.8 (Boniface overwhelms mainland Greece, chases away a force guarding the Isthmus, and arrives at Corinth and Argos), 611.26-35 (Acrocorinth and Nauplium under siege).

117. For his office and title, see *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 134 (§ 325), 152 (§ 343), 172 (§ 364), 244 (§ 430), 250 (§ 436), 252 (§ 438), 272 (§ 457), 276 (§ 460), 310 (§ 496). *Nicetae Choniatae historia*, 600.46-49: Ἰοφρέ τινος... μέγα παρὰ τοῖς τῶν Λατίνων δυναμένου στρατεύμασι (μαρισκάλδος ἦν τὸ ἀξίωμα ὁ ἀνήρ, δηλοῖ δὲ καθ’ Ἑλληνας ἡ φωνὴ τὸν πρωτοστράτορα. For his mention in the 1210 Concordat of Ravennika, see PL 216 (1891), col. 972b; Ἐγγραφα ἀναφερόμενα εἰς τὴν μεσαιωνικὴν ιστορίαν τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, τὰ πλεῖστα ἀνέκδοτα, in: F. GREGOROVIUS, *Ιστορία τῆς πόλεως τῶν Ἀθηνῶν κατὰ τοὺς Μέσους Αἰώνας*, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ιουστινιανοῦ μέχρι τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν Τούρκων κατακτήσεως (trans. and rev. ed. S. P. LAMBROS), vol. 3, Athens 1906, no. 11, 17.19: *Gaufrido marescalco totius imperii Romanie*. Cf. SETTON, *Papacy*, 40 n. 57; SCHABEL, Antelm, 93 n. 2.

“a Greek, who was a great lord of the land” and impelled the Campanian to join forces with him to conquer “much land”. The young warlord rose to the challenge, “found much good faith in the Greek”, and their campaign prospered<sup>118</sup>. But, before the winter of 1204-1205 was out, the Greek died. Then his son “rebelled against” the Campanian and “betrayed him” and “the castles in which Geoffry had set a garrison turned against him”. Upon hearing that Boniface was besieging Nauplium, in a dire need of a refuge, he mustered his companions, recklessly “rode through the land for some six days in very great peril, and thus came to the camp”<sup>119</sup>.

By choosing to conceal the name of the Byzantine lord allied with his warlike nephew in Peloponnese, the chronicler Villehardouin devised a *crux historicorum*. As D. Jacoby long before conceded “his identity and exact standing cannot be ascertained”<sup>120</sup>. Keeping in mind any identification is

118. *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 134 (§ 325): *Et uns Griex, qui mult ere sire del païs, le sot ... et li dist: « ... se tu te voloies a moi acompaingnier, je te porteroie mult bone foi, et conqueriens assez de ceste terre». Ensi se jurerent ensemble, et conquistrent ensemble grant part de la terre. Et trova Joffrois de Vilehardoin eu Grieu mult bone foi.* For the translation, see *Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin & De Joinville*, trans. F. MARZIALS, London-Toronto-New York 1908 (1921), 85. For the “good faith” attributed to the “Greek” as opposed to the literary topos of Graeca fides, see R.-J. LOENERTZ, *Aux origines du despotat d’Épire et de la principauté d’Achaïe*, *Byz* 43 (1972), 379 n. 3.

119. *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 136 (§ 326): *Ensi... si prist al Grieu maladie, si fina et mori. Et li fis al Grieu se revella contre Joffrois de Vilehardoin et le trait; et se tornerent li chastel qu'il avoient garniz contre lui. Et il oüt dire que li marchis seoit devant Naples: a tant de gent com il pot avoir s'en vait contre lui, et chevauche per mult grant peril bien .vi. jornees par mi la terre; et vint a l'ost.* *Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin & De Joinville*, 85. See also LOENERTZ, *Origines*, 380 and n. 1.

120. D. JACOBY, The Encounter of Two Societies: Western Conquerors and Byzantines in the Peloponnesus after the Fourth Crusade, *American Historical Review* 78 (1973), 873-906, esp. 883 (= D. JACOBY, *Recherches sur la Méditerranée Orientale du XIIe au XVe siècle: peuples, sociétés, économies* [Variorum 105], London 1979, no. II). Locating arbitrarily in Messenia the *pertinentia de Catacoçino* attested to the *Partitio* (see above, n. 111), Karl Hopf identified him with a postulated character of the (Alexian) Kantakouzeni family; his wild conjectures had an impact on the scholarship felt throughout the twentieth century; see K. HOPF, *Geschichte Griechenlands vom Beginn des Mittelalters bis auf unsere Zeit. I. und II. Periode*, in: *Allgemeine Encyklopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, vol. 85, ed. K. HOPF - J. S. ERSCH - J. G. GRUBER, Leipzig 1867, 212B. For the vast literature thenceforth, see SAVVIDES, *Χαμάρετος*, 368-70 n. 66. See also CHEYNET, *Pouvoir*, no. 220, 154-155 and n. 1.

merely hypothetical, a recent trend in the scholarship associates the unnamed “Greek” with the Chamareti. Discussing a 1222 letter referring to the vicissitudes of another member of this Laconian house, P. Magdalino returns to a view first expressed by the nineteenth-century editor of Villehardouin, N. De Wailly, that the figure so resolutely obscured by the chronicler is none other than Leo Chamaretus<sup>121</sup>. H. Kalligas refines this hypothesis: she suggests that, since Nicetas Choniates places Leo’s ascendancy in Laconia after 1204, it would be preferable to identify him with the son who “rebelled against” Geoffrey and “betrayed him”, and his (otherwise unattested) father with the unnamed lord<sup>122</sup>. An inference of another “great lord of the land” at Methone seems highly problematic, if one adheres to the possibility of Ostrovo/Strovizi being annexed by the Isaacian Chamareti in Alexius III’s reign, effectively cutting off by land the southern part of the *Orium Patron et Methonis* from the rest of the Peloponnese.

Some nineteenth- and twentieth-century narratives made a villain out of Villehardouin’s “Greek”: his fighting alongside the Campanians was more often than not stigmatised as collaboration with foreign invaders and occupiers<sup>123</sup>, while he was occasionally bluntly described as a traitor<sup>124</sup>. These strongly biased modern accounts can hardly be reconciled with Villehardouin’s testimony, that is, the sole contemporaneous record of his

121. N. DE WAILLY, *La Conquête de Constantinople par Geoffroi de Ville-Hardouin avec la continuation de Henri de Valenciennes*, Paris 1872, 192-193 (§ 325, *apparatus*, n. 5). MAGDALINO, Neglected authority, 319 and n. 16. See also P. GOUNARIDIS, Οἱ πολιτικὲς προϋποθέσεις γιὰ τὴν ἀντίσταση στοὺς Λατίνους τὸ 1204, *Σύμμεικτα* 5 (1983), 155 n. 4.

122. KALLIGAS, *Monemvasia*, 75-76 and n. 15.

123. For a historiographical overview of this biased literature, see SAVVIDES, Χαμάρετος, 368-370 n. 66.

124. Having identified Cantacuzenus with Geoffrey’s “Greek” in line with the Hopfian tradition (see above, n. 120), the Greek Marxist historian Yanis Kordatos reproduced verbatim W. Miller’s calling him a traitor. See W. MILLER, *The Latins in the Levant. A History of Frankish Greece (1204-1566)*, New York 1908, 36: “he received an invitation from a local magnate to join him in an attack on the lands of the neighbouring Greeks. Villehardouin, nothing loth, placed his sword at the disposal of the Greek traitor”; Y. K. KORDATOS, *Ιστορία τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Αύτοκρατορίας. Τόμος Δεύτερος (1204-1453)*, Athens 1960, 24: “Ο ἄρχοντας-φεούδαρχης μάλιστα Ι. Καντακουζηνὸς τὸν κάλεσε νὰ συμπράξουν γιὰ νὰ καταλάβουν τὰ γύρω ἀγροκτήματα (φέουδα). Ὁ Γοδεφρεῖδος δέχτηκε καὶ μαζὶ μὲ τὸν προδότη Ι. Καντακουζηνό...”.

own nephew's early Peloponnesian adventure. In context, it seems more than reasonable that Villehardouin, a sagacious man and a long-serving marshal of the Latin empire by the time he employed himself in chronicling, prudently withheld information that would embarrass his relation rather than the unnamed ally. Even so, the text is quite suggestive: a political partnership was established between the youngish Campanian warlord and a senior Byzantine lord. Regardless of the form of their agreement, there must have been specific agreed upon obligations for either party. Geoffrey explicitly undertook to fight a war of conquest masterminded by the "Greek". Since the "castles in which Geoffry had set a garrison" were thought of as rightfully claimed by him, they must have been either ceded to him or recognised as his own by right of conquest by the unnamed partner. According to R.-J. Loenerz the unnamed Byzantine "considérait sans doute Geoffroy et ses compagnons ... comme des mercenaires, et il leur offrait pour solde une partie des terres à conquérir"<sup>125</sup>. B. Hendrickx further entertained the idea that Geoffrey had already fought as a mercenary in Syria, in the pay of Prince Bohemund IV of Antioch, and, most notably, that this information was suppressed by the chronicler due to his own political agenda<sup>126</sup>.

During his early Peloponnesian adventure, and even well after that, Geoffrey was hardly politicised: he would only aspire to acquire a fief of his own as a liegeman (i.e., a feudal subject) of a superior feudal lord. As soon as he reached Boniface's camp in Nauplium he made a plea to a fellow Campanian of greater social stature, William of Champlite: "Take as many men as you can collect, and ... let us go and conquer that land ... And that which you will give me out of our conquests, I will hold from you, and I will be your liegeman"<sup>127</sup>. His master plan was put to the test, and his personal pursuit came to fruition some time later, once, after a brief siege, Corone "surrendered, and William gave it to Geoffry ... and he became his liegeman,

125. LOENERTZ, *Origines*, 379 n. 2.

126. B. HENDRICKX, *Quelques problèmes à la conquête de la Morée par les Francs*, *Bučavtivá* 4 (1972), 377-378.

127. *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 136 (§ 327): *Prenez de gent ce que vos en porroiz avoir et ... alons ... conquerorons: et ce que vos m'en volroiz doner de la conquest, je le tendrai de vos, si en serai vos hom liges; Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin & De Joinville*, 86. See also HENDRICKX, *Problèmes*, 380 and n. 35.

and set therein a garrison of his men”<sup>128</sup>. This part of the chronicle parallels with the preceding one supplanting the unnamed “Greek” with William of Champlite, while the “garrisoning” of Geoffrey’s newly acquired fief by his own men resonates even more remarkably with the phrasing regarding the “castles in which Geoffrey had set a garrison” before. It seems therefore conceivable that the chronicler, if subconsciously, drew an analogy between the Byzantine lord and Geoffrey’s Campanian liege lord. He thus implied that the “Greek” whose name he would not disclose was the superior partner of the uncongenial alliance and, effectively if not formally, liege lord of the later-to-be Prince of Achaea.

Referring to the hapless years immediately after Constantinople’s fall Nicetas Choniates lamented: “With so many Latin soldiers dispersed, anyone who would bother could ... assail the Romans [i.e., the Byzantines] ... Indeed, there were many who hired a bunch of knights and conducted petty wars”<sup>129</sup>. By the time he was writing these lines hiring Latin knights had become standard practice of the armies operating all over Byzantine territory – including the one of Nicetas’s unappreciative patron, the Emperor of Nicaea Theodore I Lascaris<sup>130</sup>. In 1211 “eight hundred Italians” fell to the last man defending Lascaris in the decisive battle of Antiocheia on the Maeander<sup>131</sup>. For his part Pope Innocent III lamented in 1210 a

128. *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 140 (§ 330): *Aprés chevauchierent a une cité que on appelle Corone ... si l'asistrent. N'i sistrent gaires longuement, quant la cité lor fur endue. Et Guillelmes la dona Joffroi de Vilehardoin, et cil en devint ses hom et la garni de sa gent; Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin & De Joinville*, 86.

129. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 639.83-88: ἦν οὖν τοῦ βουλομένου παντός ἐκ τοῦ τῶν Λατίνων πολυσπεροῦς συντάγματος... Ἦρωμάίοις ἐπιστρατεύειν... Πολλοὶ τοίνυν μετριοὶ συγκροτήσαντες πόλεμον καὶ ἵπποτας βραχεῖς μισθωσάμενοι.

130. For Nicetas’s disenchantment with Theodore I Lascaris, see A. J. SIMPSON, Before and After 1204: The Versions of Niketas Choniates’ ‘Historia’, *DOP* 60 (2006), 214-215, 218-220. A. J. SIMPSON, *Niketas Choniates. A Historiographical Study*, Oxford 2013, 22-23, 35, 39, 75-76.

131. *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, ed. A. HEISENBERG, (rev. ed. P. WIRTH), Stuttgart 1978, vol. 1, 16.6-9, 16.16-20; Ἀνωνύμου Σύνοψις Χρονική, 455.24-26, 456.1-5. *Ephraem Aenii Historia*, 270, ll. 7616-7619. *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia*, ed. L. SCHOPEN, [CSHB 19], vol. 1, Bonn 1829, 18.16-19, 19.24 – 20.4. For this event see also LOENERTZ, Origins, 371 n. 1. The dating of the battle has been contested, cf. F. VAN TRICHT, La politique étrangère de l’empire de Constantinople, de 1210 à 1216. Sa position en Méditerranée orientale: problèmes

series of blows inflicted upon the Latin Emperor of Constantinople Henry I by Michael I Ducas. Having established himself as the de facto leader of the westernmost Byzantine provinces, Ducas “grew impudent due to the strength of the Latins who, blinded by cupidity, swarm to this Little Michael [in Latin: *Michalicium*]”<sup>132</sup>. Well-trained and valiant, the Latin free-lancers became a highly marketable commodity despite their high cost, and any early thirteenth-century Byzantine rumb state would hardly think twice before putting them to good use.

Apparently, the same practice was successfully applied in Peloponnese. Upon reaching Nauplium in the spring of 1205 Geoffrey recounted he had departed “from a land that is very rich, and is called Morea”<sup>133</sup>. Even though the literature on the toponym Morea is vast, V. Laurent feasibly proposed that it must either be located in or identified with the lowlands of Elis – an alluvial plain formed by the rivers Alpheus and Peneus in northwestern Peloponnese<sup>134</sup>. It so seems that in a matter of months the unnamed “Greek”, his forces augmented by Geoffrey’s Campanians, succeeded in bringing under his sway the remainders of western Peloponnese from Methone to Morea. Provided the identification of the Byzantine lord with Leo Chamaretus’s father is to be accepted, the Isaacian expansion of the Laconians instigated by the Alexian 1195 coup and possibly implied in the *Partitio Romanie* escalated into an intensive campaign in the winter of 1204–1205. With the additional proviso the chronicler’s ascription of blame is impartial, one has to consider the political rupture between Leo Chamaretus and young Geoffrey unleashed warlike Campanians’ inherent potential for establishing

de chronologie et d’interprétation (1re partie), *Le Moyen Age* 107 (2001–2002), 219–238 <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-le-moyen-age-2001-2-page-219.htm>>, 221–227.

132. PL 216, coll. 353D–354A (No. 184; December 7, 1210): *Latinorum fretus potentia, qui cupiditate caecati ad ipsum Michalicium configurerunt*. SETTON, *Papacy*, 406A–B. LOENERTZ, *Origines*, 376 n. 1, 392. M. S. KORDOSIS, Ἡ κατάκτηση τῆς Νότιας Ἑλλάδας ἀπὸ τοὺς Φράγκους. Ἰστορικά καὶ τοπογραφικά προβλήματα, *Ιστορικογεωγραφικά* 1 (1985–1986), 53–194 (= M. S. KORDOSIS, Ἡ κατάκτηση τῆς Νότιας Ἑλλάδας ἀπὸ τοὺς Φράγκους. Ἰστορικά καὶ τοπογραφικά προβλήματα, Athens 2017, 117 and n. 16); VAN TRICHT, *Renovatio*, 142 n. 170.

133. *Villehardouin*, vol. 2, 136 (§ 327): *je vieng d'une terre qui mult est riche, que on appelle la Moree; Memoirs of the Crusades by Villehardouin & De Joinville*, 86. See also KORDOSIS, *Kατάκτηση*, 93.

134. LAURENT, *Moréas*, 186–188.

a feudal polity or their own and in fact jeopardised Laconian house's recent territorial gains and hard-won hegemony across the greater part of Peloponnese.

### Summary and further perspective

Providing interpretive axioms in the sense of a Lydian stone that would definitely settle multifarious problems posed by the *Partitio Romanie* and systematically assessed by Nicolas Oikonomides far exceeds the scope of this paper. Much work remains to be done in this domain, and the *Provintia* (fiscal theme) of Lacedaemonia has been singled out here as a case-study particularly apposite for both resuming the discussion and focusing on a restricted range of these pending issues. While singular to the 1204 document, administrative use of the name Lacedaemonia echoes long standardised ecclesiastic usage signifying the see of Sparta. This, among other examples, suggests a geographical organisational structure in which a district termed either theme or *orion/orium* regularly corresponded to an ecclesiastic metropolis. By the same principle a fiscal theme of Lacedaemonia may have been devised to legitimise the Spartan bishop's promotion to a metropolitan in 1082/83 (a legacy of Alexius I Comnenus). The textual obscurity of such a pre-existing district in the 1198 chrysobull followed only six years later by its emergence in the *Partitio Romanie* can feasibly be explained by Oikonomides's politically nuanced interpretation. According to him, Lacedaemonia reentered the tax-producing provinces register once deposed emperor Isaac II was restored in 1203. This was preceded by a hiatus lasting for Alexius III's reign, whose imperial rule had been effectively defied in Isaacian Laconia<sup>135</sup>. The Chamareti, the powerful Spartan family whose scion, Leo, was castigated by Nicetas Choniates as "a tyrant of the Laconians", must have dictated this oppositionist rather than secessionist defiance of the overthrower's regime.

Into Oikonomides's interpretive frame Peloponnese provides a tolerably documented case of a region drawn into the intra-dynastic struggle of the Angelii by Alexian-Isaacian factionalism. Isaac II must indeed have played the leading part in a pre-1195 forging of Chamareti's stubborn Isaacianism, as he certainly did in ingratiating himself with the aspirant bishop of Argos

---

135. For the latter assumption, see above, n. 22.

he promoted to metropolitan. The latter novelty may have both earned him the antipathy of the Sguri and pushed the affected metropolitan of Corinth into the political clientele of Alexius III's brother-in-law, Stryphnus. The Laconians' stance further actuated by a resort to armed force and westward expansion after the overthrow of Isaac II could explain why the westernmost Peloponnesian *orion/orium* of Patras featured such a dense pattern of imperial estates ceded after 1195 to Alexian aristocrats and the ruling branch of the dynasty – alongside those already exploited *in absentia* by a much different set of Constantinople-based landlords: monasteries founded by earlier emperors<sup>136</sup>. After Isaac II and Alexius IV's demises Leo's father, if correctly identified with the Byzantine employer of the young Geoffrey of Villehardouin, resumed hostilities to consolidate the western lowlands from Methone to Morea. To do so he recruited the Campanian knights scaling down to the Peloponnesian war theatre the ill-conceived utilisation of the Fourth Crusade by the Isaacian dauphin.

The Alexian-Isaacian dichotomy brought about by the 1195 coup, far from containing itself into the court or upper echelon of Byzantine establishment, seems to have reached all the way down to Peloponnesian elites. It provided a whole array of claims to legitimacy to local leaders who readily polarised into the opposing factions only too eager to expand their own spheres of influence. There is, however, hardly any evidence that any of these figures actually strategised right from the beginning to shake off the imperial domination and establish territorial states. Even Isaac II's restoration and Constantinople's capitulation in the August of 1203 may have only led to an intensification of factionists' campaigns, the initiative now shifting to repudiate Alexian Leo Sgurus. The true turning point must have been the climactic moment that saw the Fourth Crusade "worldly tempest" finally subsuming the Reigning City<sup>137</sup>. This unconceivable occurrence may have prodded Nicetas Choniates into imputing seditious motives to opportunistic reflexes centripetally related to dynastic feuds. Yet

136. D. JACOBY, Les archontes grecs et la féodalité en Morée franque, *TM* 2 (1967), 424-427 (= D. JACOBY, *Société et démographie à Byzance et en Romanie latine* [Variorum 35], London 1975, no. VI).

137. *Μονωδία εἰς τὸν ὑπέρτιμον Νέων Πατρῶν*, ed. J. DARROUZÈS, Les discours d'Euthyme Tornikès (1200-1205), *REB* 26 (1968), 76.10-11, 82.28-83.1.

it is from this prime authority that a subtler civil-war narrative emerges, the historian lamenting the Greek (literally *Ἑλλήνια*, i.e., “Hellenic”) misfortunes induced by barbarians allied with Greeks campaigning against Greeks<sup>138</sup>. The bitter civil strife that ensued all along Peloponnese after 1195 appears to bear the birthmark of malign domestic dynamics leading straight to 1204, and beyond.

---

138. *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 610-611.17-19: *μὴ δὴ τὰ Ἑλλήνια δυσπραγήματα τοῖς ἐν Σικελίᾳ βαρβάροις διατρανώσειας, μηδὲ ἔκπυνστα θείης ὅσα οἱ ἐκ σφῶν ἐπιστρατεύσαντες Ἐλλησι καθ' Ἑλλήνων ἐμεγαλούργησαν.*



Fig. 1. Political division of Peloponnese ca. 1330 (adapted from STADTMÜLLER, Die Geschichte, map 6).

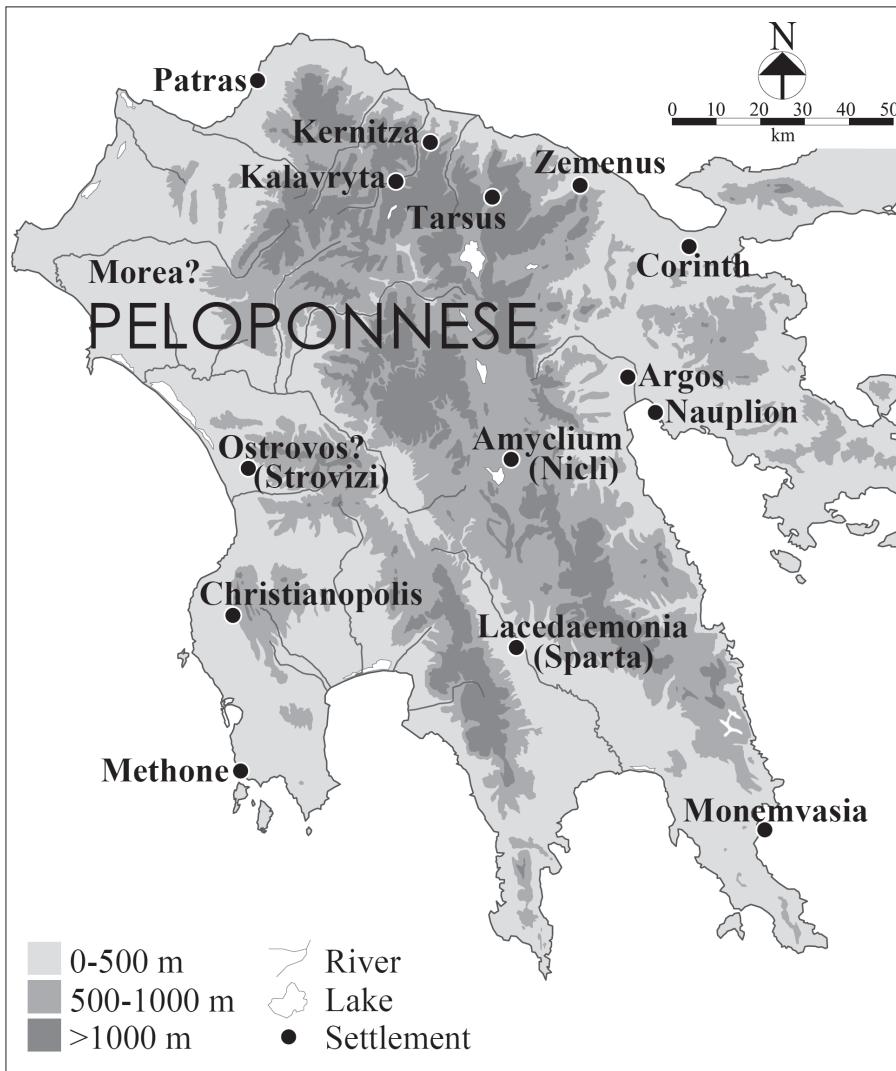


Fig. 2. Peloponnese from late eleventh to early thirteenth centuries  
(background adapted from BON, *Morée II*, maps 2-7).

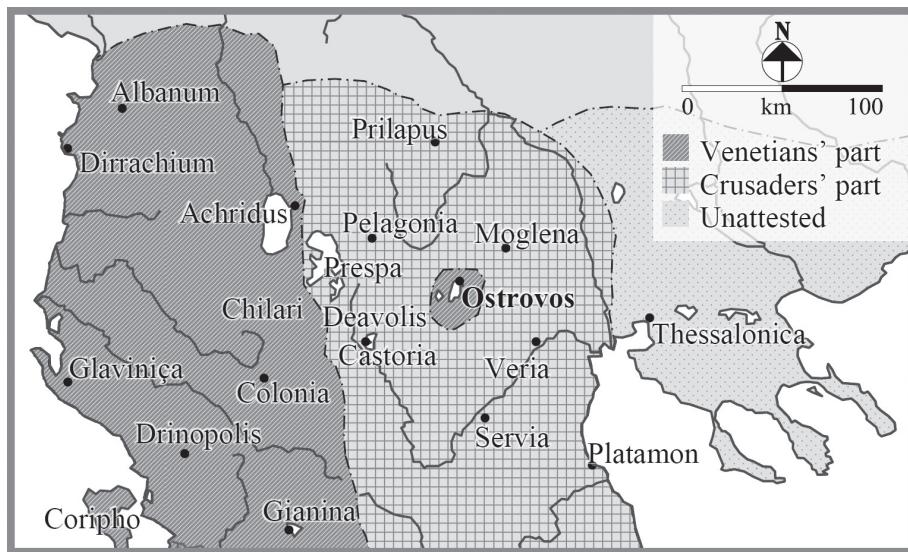


Fig. 3. A Venetian enclave in Ostrovo according to Longnon  
(adapted from LONGNON, Problèmes, 80 [map]; emphasis added).



Fig. 4. Macedonian Ostrovo, Moliscus and Moglena (background adapted from the sheets 39°/41° Monastir, 40°/41° Vodena, 39°/40° Joannina, and 40°/40° Larisa of the 3rd Military Mapping Survey of Austria-Hungary; accessible through <http://lazarus.elte.hu/hun/digkonyv/topo/3felmeres.htm>).

Η *Provintia LakeDEMONIE* και ο Λακωνικός Οίκος των Χαμαρετών το 1204:Η *Partitio Romanie* ύπο μία Νέα Προοπτική

Στο Σταυροφορικό σχέδιο διανομής της Βυζαντινής Αυτοκρατορίας του 1204, γνωστό ως *Partitio Romanie*, παραλείπονται διάφορες περιοχές. Κατά την ερμηνεία του N. Oikonomides, την οποία αντέκουνσε ο εκδότης της *Partitio*, A. Carile, οι παραλείψεις είναι ενδεικτικές αποστασιοποίησης από την κεντρική εξουσία. Η *Provintia Lakedemonie*, η οποία, αντίθετα, δεν αναφέρεται παρά μόνο στο λατινικό αυτό κείμενο, προσφέρεται για μια μελέτη περίπτωσης ώστε η υπόθεση να επανεκτιμηθεί σε διαφορετική προοπτική. Αυτή η νεωτερική επαρχία (θέμα) προέκυψε πιθανώς ως προαπαιτούμενο κέλυφος ώστε να συσταθεί η μητρόπολη Λακεδαιμονίας το 1082/83. Ο γνωστός στο Νικήτα Χωνιάτη οίκος των Χαμάρετων φαίνεται ότι δέσποζε στη Σπάρτη, στήριξε την ξενοκύνητη παλινόρθωση του Ισαάκιου Β' Αγγελού και υποκίνησε την πελοποννησιακή εμπλοκή των Καμπανών του Βιλλεαρδούνιου. Η ερμηνεία του N. Oikonomides επιτρέπει μια συνεκτική πολιτική ανάγνωση ποικίλων τοπικών εξελίξεων περί το 1204, οπότε διάφοροι Πελοποννήσιοι ηγέτες συντάχθηκαν στασιωτικά με τις σπαρασσόμενες φατρίες της δυναστείας των Αγγέλων, τους «Φιλισαάκιους» και τους «Φιλαλέξιους».

